

GUIDO BONATTI

Liber
Astronomiae
Part IV
On Horary,
First Part

Translated
by Robert Hand
Edited
by Robert Schmidt

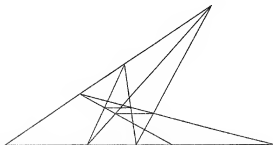
Project Hindsight
Latin Track
Volume XIII

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**Introduction to the Sixth Tractatus of
Bonatti's Liber Astronomiae,
Bonatti on Horary, the First Part
by Robert Hand**

In this book we present the first part of a four part translation of Guido Bonatti's Sixth Tractatus, which is on horary astrology. By the time this is finished we will have over 350 pages of text in English on horary astrology, making the whole one of the longer texts in English on the subject. It gives one some idea of the magnitude of Bonatti's ten treatises that there is room within it for such a lengthy treatise on horary. There are similarly lengthy treatises on elections and natal astrology among other topics.

And in addition to these four booklets there will be another one that strongly relates to horary, namely the Fifth Tractatus, the 146 considerations before judgment, about which more will be said below. Together these constitute one of the longest of all works on horary astrology, being rivaled only by the second Book of Lilly's *Christian Astrology*.

What is the relationship between Lilly and Bonatti both historically and in terms of their respective usefulness? Historically, both works are part of the same tradition. Bonatti is Western horary circa 1260 C.E. and Lilly is Western horary circa 1650 C.E., a difference of nearly 400 years! Bonatti represents the tradition as it was when it had just come from the Arabs into the Latin West. Lilly represents the tradition as it was after the West had been using it and adapting it to its own consciousness for several hundred years. It is remarkable under the circumstances how similar they are, especially since both men were practical astrologers, not theoreticians. They really used what they taught.

However, there are differences. First, there is a difference in the style of the works which reflects the differences between the men rather than the differences of the tradition. Lilly gives many examples of horary in action. Bonatti gives only a few examples but is much stronger on the basic principles. The 146 considerations, which will occupy an entire booklet of our series, is paralleled by only a few pages in Lilly. And in addition there are nearly another twenty pages in the beginning of this booklet giving more first principles.

Second, and this is not to take away from Lilly, Bonatti's approach is incredibly systematic, sometimes almost pedantically so. As one whose specialty is not horary, I have found that studying Bonatti has

given me a much clearer idea of the basics of horary than studying Lilly. But Lilly goes into much more detail in many areas and of course has the indispensable examples. It seems to me that teachers of horary might well consider using Bonatti as an introductory text and Lilly as a more advanced text.

Third, there is a major methodological difference, the use of reception. Let me take this up in more detail in a section by itself.

Reception and Perfection in Bonatti

Bonatti introduces us to reception in the Third Tractatus. (See Part II, the section entitled "On the Donation of Virtue, or Reception.") As a reminder, let me say that reception exists when any planet applies to an aspect of one of its lords by domicile, exaltation, triplicity, bound or face, or one of those lords applies to it. There is also reception when a planet applies to any second planet that has strong essential dignity in its own (i.e., the second planet's) position, or that second planet applies to the first. A reception is strong when it is by domicile or exaltation. It is weak if it is by triplicity, bound or face only. Reception is again strong if it is by two of these lesser dignities at the same time with the same planet, which Mars would have if the degree were in a water sign and a bound of Mars. It is very strong or perfect if both planets receive each other by a major dignity and there is application. This is so whether the reception is by the same dignity (mutual) or different but strong dignities (mixed).

The function of reception in Bonatti is that its presence (at least for the strong receptions) improves the quality of a *perfection*. Let us therefore talk about perfection for a moment. Perfection has two related meanings. First of all, it means that an application between the significator of the querent and the significator of the matter sought for is completed without any of the prohibitions that are mentioned in the Third Tractatus, such as abscission of light, refranation etc. Second, it refers to outcomes in horary and elections. If a matter is perfected, it simply means that it happens, or the hope is fulfilled. The word 'perfection' comes from the Latin verb *perficio* which means 'to complete' or 'fulfill'.

Bonatti in the first part of this tractatus gives us a very clear and orderly statement about the effects of reception upon perfection. He gives us a hierarchy of aspects that indicate perfection. It looks something like this, from most likely to perfect to least likely to perfect:

1. Applying trine.
2. Applying sextile.
3. Applying square.
4. Applying opposition.
5. No application at all.

The function of strong reception in an application is to raise the likelihood of a perfection one step up from where it would have otherwise been in the hierarchy. With receptions the hierarchy of perfections listed above would look like this:

1. Applying trine with reception.
2. Applying trine without reception, sextile with reception.
3. Applying sextile without reception, square with reception.
4. Applying square without reception, opposition with reception.
5. Applying opposition without reception.
6. No application at all.

Throughout Bonatti's writings we find reception playing a central role; yet this teaching is not strongly represented in Lilly and the 17th Century English school who describe (at least overtly) only mutual receptions. Up until recently we believed that Lilly and the other 17th Century English did not use "simple," i.e., non-mutual, receptions at all. But Sue Ward and one of her students have found what must be references to receptions (other than mutual receptions) in Lilly.¹ But in

¹ Sue Ward cites the following passage from page 458 of Lilly in an article posted on her webpage in the Internet.

"If you find the lord of the eleventh in an angle received, judge the thing shall come to pass as he would wish.

"If you find the Receiver of the disposition of the ☿ in a common Signe, judge he shall have but part of the thing hoped for: If the same Receiver shall be in a moveable Signe, he shall onely have the name, or a probability of having thereof, or else very little of it: but if the same Receiver be in a fixed Signe, he shall have the thing whole and compleat; but if the Receiver of the ☿ be unfortunate, the matter shall receive damage or hurt, after that he hath the same, or is in possession thereof.

"If you find the Receiver of the ☿ received, he shall likewise obtaine the same, and more then he looked for: if you find the Lord of the ascendant

any case, Lilly does not describe such receptions at all clearly. And even with mutual receptions there is a difference between Lilly and the earlier astrologers. It seems that for Bonatti as well as for other later astrologers, such as the 16th Century astrologer Schoener, no reception, mutual or otherwise, can occur without an applying aspect. For these astrologers there can be no mutual reception involving signs that have no familiarity with respect to each other. I do not suggest that the 17th Century English were wrong to neglect the aspect requirement; I only point out the difference.

The above lists are not intended to describe all of the modes of the perfection of an event. Bonatti lists others, such as the presence of the significator of the matter sought for in the house of the querent; but these are described clearly enough in the text in the first part of this tractatus.

Before we leave the subject of reception and perfection there is one more important point. There are certain conditions under which reception, even strong reception, is badly weakened and even rendered non-functional. This is described in the section entitled, "When Reception is Not Effective." Here it is said that in general a planet cannot receive when it is in detriment or fall, and that a planet cannot be a receiver when the received planet is in one of receiver's major debilities. So Saturn cannot receive when it is in Aries, Cancer, or Leo, nor can it receive planets in those signs. However, elsewhere in the text it is made clear that when a planet is in a major debility, it can be received and the debility strongly mitigated if the receiver is dignified. The text also demonstrates other mitigations of these cancellations of the virtue of reception. The end result of all of this is clear. One must take many factors into consideration when dealing with receptions.

received, he shall obtaine whatsoever be hoped for: this must be understood in things feasible and possible."

In the passage cited I think that the words 'receiver' and 'received' are not used with complete consistency. The reference to the "Receiver of the disposition of the ♃" does not seem to be reception in the technical sense described here. Disposition is "received" from a planet in the manner of the word being used in the ordinary non-technical English sense of the word. But the two other references to reception *do* appear to be the same kind of "simple" reception we have been discussing here. It does not seem possible that Lilly refers to any kind of mutual reception in these passages.

Before a general note on certain terms, I would like to say something about the Fifth Tractatus on the 146 considerations. Since there is already an English translation of the considerations, the one by Henry Coley from the 17th Century, we had originally decided not to redo them until near the end of the Bonatti translation project. However, in the course doing this translation, I had to check on a couple of the considerations for reference in footnotes to the early parts of this tractatus. It turned out that Coley's translations are much more paraphrases of what Bonatti actually said than translations. In some cases where Bonatti's Latin got particularly obscure, Coley simply ignores the passages in question. In addition Coley's English is of course 17th Century English. This in itself is reason enough for retranslating the 146 considerations, but with the paraphrasing nature of his translations, it does seem that a new translation is needed even more. We will do this sooner rather than later.

The four booklets of Bonatti on horary should break down as follows: This first part deals with houses one through six. The second part will deal with the seventh house by itself. This may seem inordinate, but the seventh house was the single most important of all houses in traditional horary. This is especially true with Bonatti because he was such a specialist in the horary of war, which is a seventh house matter. Houses eight through twelve will take two more booklets. The only thing that really seems strange is that Bonatti was able to dispose of the first six houses in as short a space as he did.

While these four booklets on horary stand alone to a great extent, along with the Fifth Tractatus on the 146 considerations, the reader is reminded that the first three books in this series, the First, Second, and Third Tractatuses, also contain much material that is essential to horary. The only tractatus that is not relevant to horary so far is the very short fourth, which we have not translated as yet. It is only a listing and brief discussion of the main categories of conjunctions of planets. It is most related to mundane astrology. One wonders why it was placed in the work where it was. The answer may be as simple as the possibility that the ordering of tractatuses was not done by Bonatti but by a later "editor."

General Notes

To Commit Disposition or Virtue — This English phrase is a very literal translation of the Latin *committere dispositionem* or *virtutem*. One encounters it everywhere in Latin astrology. Its meaning is very simple. When a planet commits disposition to another planet, it causes the second planet to become the primary indicator of the outcome signified by the combination. Committing virtue is essentially the same thing.

Absolute and Determinate Questions — A question is absolute if the querent asks a question in general without regard to a specific set of circumstances. Here is a sample bit of text which illustrates the nature of an absolute question.

"If someone is concerned about a house or a piece of land, or about a vineyard, or meadow, or olive grove, or forest or about inherited property in general which he may wish to buy or otherwise hopes to obtain, and the question is absolute *because he does not speak of the land, or of the house, or of the inherited property of such and such a person, . . .*"

If one asks, "Will I marry?" that is an absolute question. If one asks, "Will I marry so and so?" that is a determinate question. So a determinate question is one which asks a question in a specific context. For example, here is a passage which illustrates the nature of a determinate question.

"But if his question was determinate and not absolute such as, if he were to say, 'Will I be delivered from the servitude of my lord in which I [now] am?' or 'Will I go forth from his power or not?'"

The reason why this distinction is important according to Bonatti is that it is supposed to alter the houses and the rulers that the astrologer should examine in order to answer a question. Yet as important as Bonatti seems to feel this distinction to be, and as fundamental as he seems to assume it to be, I have seen no such distinction in the works of the 17th Century English. Only time and practice will tell whether the issue of absolute versus determinate questions will prove to be a major or unimportant distinction in horary astrology.

The Sixth Tractatus

The First Part, Three Introductory Chapters

Concerning the Divisions of Judgments or an Introduction in Brief to the Judgments of the Stars.

Chapter I

If you intend to arrive at judgments by means of astronomy, you should have a care to consider first whether that person who comes to you about to make an inquiry questions intentionally¹ or not, just as is said elsewhere.² Likewise in that place is described more fully than here how

¹ *ex intentione*.

² This is a reference to the seventh consideration of the 146 considerations given in the fifth tractate which is translated below.

"The seventh consideration is that you should beware for yourself of those means by which the astrologer can err, concerning which matters the sages have named four. The first is if the querent does not know how to ask. The second is if the astrologer takes the shadow [of a sundial] in a place that is not level or with a faulty instrument. The third is if the astrologer does not know whether the Sun has already receded from the line of the Midheaven, or whether it is on the line, before it, or after it. The fourth is if the fortunes and infortunes should be equal; wherefore you should then not accept any question if you can avoid it.

"However it seems to me that three other means could be added by which the astrologer can err. For one, to wit, if a querent should come to the astrologer for the purpose of putting [the astrologer] to the test, just as some persons sometimes do who say, 'Let us go to such an astrologer, and let us ask concerning such a matter, and we shall see if he speaks the truth to us.' [This is] just as the Jews did to the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Likewise by another means it seems that the astrologer may err, namely, if the querent does not ask intentionally, as sometimes some persons do who, when they encounter an astrologer or when they go on behalf of other doings of their own, consider some matter about which they wish to ask the astrologer, and so they ask in an unexpected manner, and then an error can happen.

"And you can say, 'How can I know whether or not the querent asks intentionally, or asks for the sake of putting to the test or not?' To which I can say to you that it seems to me very arduous and difficult; but nevertheless I have experienced [it] often and I have found it to be true because I looked at the hour of the interrogation and I saw the Ascendant of that hour, and if I found in some sign on the eastern line [of the

you may know whether that person seeks intentionally or not, although certain matters are touched upon in this place which are not touched upon there. For if the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the hour have the same triplicity, or have the same complexion,¹ or the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the hour are the same [planet], the question is intentional and radical.² If however if it is otherwise, it will

horizon] that the Ascendant was between the end of one sign and the beginning of another, I said that the querent does not ask intentionally, or that he asked for the purpose of putting [me] to the test; and I found several who confessed to me that it was so, and they considered afterward that I knew something other than they believed before and they brought a trust to the art when they previously had not brought [a trust to the art]. And when I myself found any Ascendant as I have described, I said to him, 'Brother, I do not wish to tire myself unless you ask intentionally because I am suspicious lest you wish to deceive me by not propounding this question as you should; but if you wish that I should labor for your doing, you should provide for me for my labor,' and if there was a deception, he immediately withdrew.

"By another means, to wit, a third, an astrologer can err, such as if the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the hour are not the same, or the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the hour are not of the same triplicity, or they are not of the same complexion with the Ascendant; for if you find it thus, the question is not radical, as I have experienced many times. Moreover I have recited this to you on this account so that you may know what men you ought to look [out for], because, as the Philosopher said, a matter goes forth according to the quality of the concern of the querent, and inasmuch as he comes to you out of necessity as one sad, or pondering, and as one who hopes that you can answer to him [with] the truth to his question and that you know how to; for you are able to examine for him with certainty."

¹ That is, they are planets with a similar elemental composition such as the Sun and Mars which are both hot and dry, or the Moon and Venus which are both cool and moist, etc.

² The word 'radical' and 'radix' come from a conventional Latin phrase *radix nativitatis* which means the 'foundation of the nativity'. This expression denotes the fact that a nativity is a valid starting point for inquiry. Any other kind of chart such as a question may be "radical" if it also qualifies as being a valid starting point. This determination is the first matter that must be settled in horary because if the chart is not really connected to the question, then the chart is not radical. The question of intention comes up because of the following reasons: 1) The querent's intention must be clear; he or she must

not be seen that it is intentional or radical except perhaps in an unexpected happening.¹ You will assign the Ascendant to the querent, and if it is necessary for you, have recourse to the face.² And you will perceive the sign which signifies the matter sought for and the planet which rules that sign, and attend carefully to the aspect of the significators and also to the joining together of the fortunes and malefics to the significators, bodily or by aspect.³ And you should know that the bodily conjunction of the Sun, which is called 'combustion', is an impediment harmful beyond all others. Likewise you will consider whether the significator of the querent or the matter sought for is in its own domicile, or [you will consider] in whatever house it may be from that domicile, and whether or not it is free from impediment; and it should not be in the *via combusta*. One must reckon whether the significators (and the Moon is always among them) are in strong, weak, or middling places; and you will look at whether [they are] in the beginnings of the houses, or in the middle, or in the their endings, likewise at the planets that assist the significators and those that rebel against any of them according to their state of being.

When you have carefully considered all of these things, you will be able to weigh the judgment of the question which has been put to you, seeing that the fortunes signify prosperity but the malefics will

know what he or she wants. 2) The intention must be serious and not merely born out of a wish to test or deceive the astrologer. 3) The intention must be the querent's own. A question cannot be asked under compulsion from another. If not all of these statements are true, then the chart will not be radical, i.e., 'foundational', to coin a word.

¹ It is not clear whether this phrase goes with the previous sentence or this one. Also see page 22, note 3, in which is given the second consideration of the 146 considerations which deals with the issue of the unexpected happening.

² *descende ad personam*. The astrologer should look for a description of the querent and his physical appearance in the symbolism of the Ascendant.

³ This whole preceding section beginning with "If however" is a bit unclear due to a sudden lack of punctuation in the Latin. Here is the text.

... si autem aliter fuerit non videtur quod sit ex intentione seu radicalis nisi forte in casu repentino attribues ascendens querenti; et si necesse fuerit tibi descende ad personam percipiesque signum quod significat rem quesitam et planetam illi signo dominantem et aspectum significatorum coniunctionem quoque fortunarum et malorum ad significatores per corpus vel per aspectum diligenter attende.

pronounce contrariwise. If however you find that the fortunes and malefics are equal, they portend a middling judgment; but if the fortunes are strong [they portend] good fortune; but if the malefics, you will judge the contrary. You will also consider the persons who ask the questions, how and by what means it concerns each of those asking the question to ask to the question; whether the questioner asks by himself and for himself, or by means of another and for another, and by which houses the persons asking the questions are signified, and likewise for the matter sought for, and what may be signified by any house, the significations of which you have above in the chapter on the significations of the twelve houses.

How One May Reach a Judgment. Chapter II

Because judging concerning futures things is very difficult (and that this is so in truth is made evident by the considerations conveyed to you above¹) nor did Hippocrates say that judgment is useless, but yet [it is] difficult² because nothing in the world is more difficult than to predict the truth about things to come, [because of these things] it is necessary before [this discussion] comes to the matter of judging that I should say certain things about these matters which pertain to the business of judgments; without these I believe it will be impossible that you can know how to judge according to the way of truth, even though I have made some mention of these matters above.³ Because it is necessary first to know what are the causes of perfecting matters, and which of these will show you the truth, and which are those which prohibit them so that they are not perfected; and [it is necessary to know] from which causes the accomplishment of matters may come about, and from which their detriment may come about; and [it is necessary to know] the signification of each factor which brings about perfection and also [the signification] of each factor that is the cause of destruction or prohibition, and which factors will signify the time when these matters ought to be perfected or when they ought to be destroyed or prohibited; [it is

¹ A reference to the Fifth Tractate and the 146 considerations.

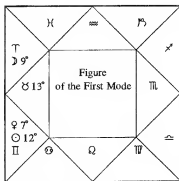
² Reading *incassum iudicium autem difficile* instead of *incassum iudicium aut difficile*.

³ In the previous chapter.

necessary to know all of these] before you may presume to judge. And this is the office which the most high creator of all things has given to the planets, the signs, and also the fixed stars.

And Messahalla and many others have said that the bringing about and the destruction of things in this world has to be accomplished principally in three modes: In the first mode it is such that the lord of the Ascendant, the lord of the matter sought after, and also the Moon are being joined. In the second mode it is such that if the aforesaid signifiers are not being joined, there may be some planet which transfers light among them, to wit, if it separates from one and it is being joined to another. In the third mode it is such that some other planet which is more ponderous than the aforementioned signifiers makes a collection of light and they are both being joined to the ponderous planet and each of them commits its own disposition to it because the more ponderous planet is the one which perfects the matter.

And it is sometimes the case that a matter is perfected according to the entire purpose of the querent, sometimes¹ it is perfected in part, and sometimes neither entirely nor in part. And I shall expound to you on all of these things to this purpose, that you may understand and recognize how you may be able to judge concerning those matters that present themselves to you.



Concerning the Exposition of the First Mode

The exposition of the first mode by which matters are perfected is when the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, are joined with the lord of the matter sought after, for then the matter is perfected.

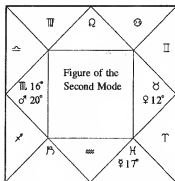
For example, a certain question was

¹ Reading *aliquando* for *quando*.

posed whether someone would obtain a certain estate which he wished to buy; and the Ascendant was 13° of Taurus, Venus was in 7° of Gemini, the Sun in 12° of Gemini, and the Moon in 9° of Aries. The ruler of the Ascendant, namely Venus, which was going toward bodily conjunction with the Sun, and the Moon, which was going toward the aspectual conjunction of the Sun, signified that the matter ought to be perfected, that it would be perfected if the one who asked the question wished to pursue it so that it would be perfected, and especially because the Sun, which was the significator of the matter sought for received the Moon from Aries by the sextile aspect.¹ And the matter would be perfected much more by the sextile, but [it would be] even by a square or opposition as long as there is reception between the significators, although the perfection will be with difficulty and also worry or great effort, and likewise with opposition and uneasiness of mind.

Concerning the Exposition of the Second Mode

The exposition of the second mode is when one planet is separated from a second planet and is being joined to a third and commits the disposition which it accepts from the other to the planet to which it is being joined.



For example, a question was posed to me. A certain person asked whether he would acquire the goods of one of his uncles who did not have children. The Ascendant of the question was 16° of Scorpio; Mars was in 20° in that sign; and Venus [was] in 12° degrees of Taurus going toward the opposition of Mars; and Mercury was in 17° of Pisces.

¹ The Sun is the exaltation lord of Aries.

Mercury was separating from the sextile aspect by which he was joined to Venus who received him by way of Pisces which is her exaltation; and she committed to him her disposition, and Mercury carried it to Mars and committed it to him by the trine aspect. This signified that the querent would obtain the goods of his uncle because Venus, which was the significatrix of the querent's uncle's goods, committed her disposition to Mercury and Mercury carried it to Mars which was the significator of the querent. For the sixth house is the signifying house of the uncle, to wit, of the father's brother, just as I have said above in the chapter on houses, because the sixth house is the third house from the fourth house which is the house of the father, and the seventh house is the second house from sixth house which signifies the substance of the uncle. And the transferal of light signified that the matter would be accomplished by the acts¹ of deputies who will involve themselves in the matter. And it was seen that it was bound to be done by the act of a familiar of one of the querent's partners;² and if the querent does not have a partner, it would be accomplished by the act of some familiar of the querent's enemy, or of the querent's wife³ if the querent did not live in his wife's house with the familiar;⁴ and if that familiar should not be found, it would be accomplished by the act of some servant of the querent's brother;⁵ but if the brother does not have a servant, it will be accomplished by the act of an elder brother⁶ of the querent; but if the querent does not have an older brother, it will be accomplished by the act of a certain one of the native's friends;⁷ but if the querent does not have a friend, it will be accomplished by the act of some soldier or familiar of the king;⁸ but if such persons are not found, it will be

¹ *per manus*.

² Mercury rules the second house from the seventh house. Familiars or household retainers and servants are second house.

³ Again, Mercury rules the second from the seventh.

⁴ Because then the familiar would be signified by the second house.

⁵ The eighth house, ruled by Mercury, is the sixth (servants) from the third.

⁶ *preingnus*. This is an undocumented word, but it appears to be made of out of *prae* (Medieval form *pre*) "before-hand" and *ingenuus* which classically means a free-born male. The eleventh house is a house of elder brothers and is also ruled by Mercury in the chart, hence our translation.

⁷ The same logic as the previous.

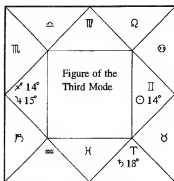
⁸ The second house from the tenth. Note that soldiers are reckoned as being household retainers of the king.

accomplished by the act of someone in whom the querent's hidden enemies have complete trust.¹ And if such a person is not to be found, the matter will be accomplished by the act of that one who is signified by the house in which the Moon is at the time.

Concerning the Exposition of the Third Mode

The exposition of the third mode is when one planet which is the significator of the matter sought for is not being joined to lord of the Ascendant of the question, but both are being joined to another planet which is more ponderous than they, and both commit to that third planet their virtue, and the more ponderous planet perfects the matter sought for.

As for example, a certain person asked whether he would obtain a



particular parish church which he desired. The Ascendant was 14 degrees of Sagittarius; Jupiter was in that sign at 15 degrees, the Sun, which was the significator of the church, in 14 degrees of Gemini, and Saturn in Aries 18 degrees. Both were being joined to Saturn, and he collected the light of both; therefore the collection of the light of Jupiter and the Sun which Saturn was

making signified that the matter would be perfected and that he would obtain the sought for church. [This was] because the Sun, which was the lord of the ninth house (which has that signification), committed his disposition to Saturn because the Sun received Saturn from his² own exaltation; and Saturn entrusted and committed the matter sought for

¹ This one seems a bit strange considering that the eleventh house is the twelfth from the twelfth, unless, of course, the "complete trust" is misplaced.

² I.e., the Sun's.

(which was committed to him by the Sun) to Jupiter.¹ The matter would be perfected more easily if the querent asked about the matter sought for on behalf of someone else rather than if he asked about it for himself, because although Jupiter was joined to Saturn by a trine aspect, Saturn did not receive him with a perfect reception, because Saturn did not receive Jupiter except by triplicity.² It seemed [therefore] that the querent's brother might be the one by whose hands the matter would be perfected.³ But if the querent were not to have a brother, it might be the brother of someone who pretends to love the querent although he does not love him;⁴ and if there were not such a person, it might be the son of some one of his friends;⁵ and if such a one were not to be found, it

¹ The main problem with the setup in this chart is that the Sun signifying the preferment is applying to an opposition of Jupiter, the significator of the querent. This would normally be an indication that the matter would not be perfected. However, the collection of light by Saturn, sextiling the Sun and trining the Jupiter, means that some factor enables the perfection. Bonatti proceeds in his usual manner to leave nothing to the imagination and lists a large number of ways in which this might work out.

However, there is another possible problem with this example. Later on in this section (see page 14) Bonatti describes how a planet in major debility can neither receive nor be received, such as Saturn here in its fall in Aries. This example seems to contradict that statement. However, there are a couple of factors that may mitigate the contradiction. First of all this is a collection of light between two other factors neither of which is in bad condition. Saturn only has to effect the connection, not establish the cosmic state of the primary signifiers. Second, one of the other signifiers is Jupiter signifying the querent, having a natural affinity with religious matters, being in its own sign, and in an angle conjunct the Ascendant. Thus one of the signifiers is powerful indeed. As with so many other phenomena, it would appear that, while a statement may in general be true, there are always factors that can mitigate it or even reverse the signification.

² A perfect reception happens when the receiver is a planet which rules the received by domicile or exaltation, and aspects it. Saturn is the participating triplicity ruler in fire (using the Dorothean system which Bonatti used), but reception by triplicity is too weak to operate effectively unless there is also a reception by bound or face involving the same planets in the same way.

³ Saturn rules the querent's third.

⁴ Saturn also rules the second house, which is the third house from the twelfth house of hidden enemies.

⁵ The querent's third is also the fifth from the querent's eleventh.

might be a servant of some important man;¹ and if such a one were not found, it might be some enemy of the Church;² and if that enemy of the Church were not found, it might be a friend³ of a son of the querent;⁴ and if the querent were not to have a son, or the son were not to have a friend, it might be some hidden enemy of the father of the querent;⁵ but if the querent were not to have a father, or the father were not to have such an enemy, it might happen because of some manner of simony.⁶ This [third] mode of perfecting matters is a lasting one.⁷

Concerning Another Mode of Perfecting Matters

There is another mode of perfecting matters which is said to be subordinate to the preceding one, which is not lasting nor so complete, to wit: If two planets are joined to another more ponderous than themselves, and they commit disposition and virtue to that third planet (just as I have described concerning Jupiter and the Sun, how they committed virtue to Saturn), and that more ponderous planet which receives the disposition is impeded, namely, cadent, retrograde, combust, joined to malefics which impede it, or it is besieged by malefics, I say that it can perfect the matter and that it does sometimes perfect the matter, but after the matter has been settled and perfected, it is ruined and it does not remain in its state of perfection.⁸ Therefore

¹ Saturn rules the third house, which is the sixth from the tenth.

² Saturn rules the seventh from the ninth.

³ Reading *amicus* for *inimicus*. This is demonstrated both by the astrological sense and by the next clause where *amicus* is used.

⁴ Saturn rules the eleventh from the fifth.

⁵ Saturn rules the twelfth from the fourth.

⁶ Simony is the practice of buying ecclesiastical preferments. This would seem to be the most obvious interpretation of the chart because Saturn rules the second house of substance enabling the querent simply to buy the benefice.

⁷ There is some ambiguity in the Latin. One could have read the sentence as indicating that simony was a lasting way of getting preferments, but *modus* is used throughout this section to refer to the three major modes of perfection. Therefore I have broken off this last clause from the sentence and treated it as referring to the three modes, i.e., that it says that the *collection of light* is a particularly lasting method of bring about *perfection*.

⁸ In that previous example (the "third mode") Saturn was only in fall. Elsewhere this is considered a major impediment but apparently not for this purpose.

you can judge for that person who asks you [the question] in this manner; "It seems that this matter may be perfected, but it will be ruined after it has been perfected."

Concerning Some Other Accidents of Matters Which Are Perfected

[Commentary by Translator: This and the following sections are extremely important to the student of horary. In these sections Bonatti lays down a set of graduated criteria which may be used to determine the likelihood of the perfection of a question. The reader should notice the extremely orderly nature and clarity of the principles involved.]

Another issue arises in matters which are perfected, namely, that some things are accomplished with difficulty, hardship, effort, and extreme complication; some things are accomplished with ease; some things are accomplished with suit¹ and also uneasiness; some things are accomplished with suit but without great uneasiness; [and] some things are accomplished without suit and without any difficulty, to the contrary, they come without any planning [at all].

Concerning Those Matters Which Come Easily

Those matters which come about easily and without suit, and also without any difficulty, such that all of these problems are not worth considering,² are [those that happen] when the lord of the Ascendant or the lord of the querent, and the significator of the matter sought for are being joined by trine, or sextile aspect, and with reception.

Concerning Those Matters Which Are Accomplished in a Short Time

But those matters which are accomplished in a short time, and without suit, even though the hope may not be held for them that they may be accomplished, are [those that happen] when the lord of the Ascendant³ is being joined with the lord of the matter sought for by a trine aspect

¹ *petitio*. Throughout this section we use the word 'suit' for *petitio*. The word apparently means that the querent has to press the matter very hard by frequent supplications (another translation of *petitio*) or possibly even lawsuit.

² *inestimate*.

³ Or querent we may assume.

without reception, or by a sextile aspect with reception.

Concerning those Matters Which Are Accomplished with Suit

Those matters which are accomplished with suit and by means of the querent's striving are [those that happen] when the lord of the Ascendant¹ is being joined with the significator of the matter sought for by the square aspect with reception or the sextile aspect without reception.

Concerning Those Matters Which Are Accomplished with Suit, Striving, and Effort

Those matters which are accomplished with suit, and also striving, and obstacles, great effort, and uneasiness are [those that happen] when the significator of the querent is being joined with the significator of the matter sought for by the opposition² or square aspect without reception.

Concerning Those Matters Which Are Accomplished with Effort, Which Yet Are Hardly Ever Perfected

Those matters which are accomplished with the greatest effort, obstacles, suit, striving, difficulty, anxiety, and likewise unhappiness, and, as it were, after the desperation of friends and relatives, but which nevertheless are perfected hardly ever or not at all (or if they are perfected, their accomplishment takes a long time, and also with expense) are those in which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, and the lord of the matter sought for are being joined by opposition without reception.

When the Matter Which Someone Wishes May Be without Reception

There is also another mode such that a matter which someone intends to have may be perfected; and it is easier than all of the aforesaid

¹ Or again with the lord of the querent.

² The logical stream here would seem to indicate that the opposition should be with reception. But the text does not say so. However, if Bonatti really does not intend the opposition in this case to be without reception, then there is nothing to distinguish this case from the next case where the opposition is explicitly without reception.

modes, to wit, the significator of the matter is joined to the significator of the one who desires the matter by a sextile with reception or by a trine without reception,¹ or the significator of the matter is in the Ascendant, or in the house which signifies that person for whom the matter is desired. You should understand the same about the bodily conjunction as about the aspects, for then the matter is accomplished most easily.

When the Matter Which One Asks about Is a Magistracy or Dignity

If indeed the matter which one asks about is a magistracy or lay dignity² which someone hopes for, and the questioner hopes for this from a king or from his own lord, and the significator of the aforesaid is in the Ascendant, or it is joined with the lord of the Ascendant or with the Moon by the trine or sextile aspect or bodily conjunction and with reception, it signifies that the sought for dignity will be perfected without suit by the querent or by another on his behalf.

When a Matter Is Hoped for from a Great Man, How it Will Be Accomplished

But if someone hopes for some matter from someone who is below the king or from some one of the querent's own friends, or from a common person of any country, or similar sorts of persons, the matter will be accomplished and it will come by means of a fortuitous occurrence.³

When a Conjunction or Aspect Does not Intervene

If however there is no joining aspect between them⁴ but there is a transference of light, the matter will be accomplished by the hands of

¹ The difference between this instance and the second listed above, "Concerning Those Matters Which Are Accomplished in a Short Time," is that there the querent's significator is being joined to the significator of the matter sought for, whereas here the significator of the matter sought for is being joined to the significator of the querent.

² An ecclesiastical office would have different significations.

³ We presume that this short section refers back to the previous section and refers to the same indications in the chart.

⁴ The significators.

emissaries who will involve themselves in the matter so that it is perfected. But in order to know who these emissaries may be, you should inquire from the house whose lord is the significator of any of these emissaries, or from the houses in which you may find them, just as I have sufficiently described to you [already],¹ for it would be a tedious matter to explain this in detail for every house. Then look at the Moon, because if it is separated from the significator of the one who desires the matter, or from the one who asks concerning the matter, and she is joined to the significator of the matter sought for, it signifies that those persons who run about between them will come in the name of the one who desires the matter and according to his knowledge and will. If however the Moon is separated from the planet which signifies the matter and is joined to the significator of the one who desires the matter, it signifies that the emissaries will begin on behalf of the matter or [will come] from those who are able to perfect the matter. And if that matter is perfected by emissaries, those emissaries will be from among those persons who are signified by the houses of which [the significators of the emissaries] are the rulers. Look then at which persons are signified by those houses and judge according to them whether [the emissary] may be a familiar, a brother, a neighbor, a father or son, a servant, or partner or the partner's familiar, or a religious person or a king or governor,² or a friend or hidden enemy.

[When Reception is Not Effective]³

Also one must know that although I have said that matters will be perfected by trine and sextile aspects, nevertheless it is necessary to understand [this] rationally; because if the place from which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is aspected by the lord of the matter sought for, (to wit, the planet by which the matter is signified or the place from which the lord or the significator of the matter is aspected

¹ In the second and third modes above Bonatti gave many examples of the logic of determining the "emissary" from rulership of the planet transferring or collecting light.

² *rector*.

³ This title is not in the original text but the subject matter is important enough to warrant giving it a heading separate from the surrounding text.

by the lord of the Ascendant or by the Moon) is a major debility¹ of the aspecting planet, the matter is not perfected even if the aspect is a sextile or trine, as in the following example:

The Ascendant was Leo and there was a question about marriage, whether it would be perfected or not, and the Sun or the Moon (which signifies wives) was joined by Saturn from Aries which is the fall² of Saturn. Even though the aspect as it is in itself is with reception,³ nevertheless Saturn does not perfect the matter; to the contrary it impedes it so that the matter is not perfected; not only does it impede, it even strives to destroy the matter if it can. And if it were joined to the significator [of the querent] from Cancer or from Leo, it would do the same because either of these is a fall⁴ for Saturn. It is similar if the significator of any matter, or the Moon, is joined by the Sun from Libra (which is his descension)⁵ or Aquarius (which is his fall)⁶ because then the Sun cannot receive any of these, and so it destroys the matter and does not permit it to be perfected.⁷ Also [it is the same] if a significator is joined by Venus from Scorpio, from Aries, or from Virgo, or by Jupiter from Capricorn, from Gemini, or from Virgo. And you should understand the major debility⁸ of any planet [in the same way]; nor does any aspect prevail unless a reception should intervene which breaks malice. You should also understand it [to be] the same if a significator,

¹ The word actually is *detrimentum* which would seem to imply only the 'detriment' in the technical sense of the word. However, in the example which follows below, Bonatti uses Saturn in Aries which is a fall, not a detriment. Therefore we assume that Bonatti uses the word in a non-rigorous way to mean major debility. The modern, rigorous distinction between detriment and fall was not observed as strictly in the Middle Ages.

² *detrimentum*. See previous note.

³ Assuming that the Sun is being referred to here as the ruler of the Ascendant, the Sun is the exaltation and triplicity lord of Aries, so there is a strong reception here. However, Leo is the detriment of Saturn.

⁴ *casus*. Here again no distinction is made between fall and detriment. In fact Bonatti in this section is using the terms reversed from the modern usage.

⁵ *descensio* = 'fall'.

⁶ *casus* = 'detriment'.

⁷ Here we have a definite statement again in Bonatti that a severely debilitated planet cannot receive. See the section, "On the Donation of Virtue, or Reception," in our edition of Bonatti, Part III

⁸ *detrimentum*.

or the Moon, is joined by a planet which is in the major debility¹ of that significator, or the Moon, such as if Mercury were the significator and were joined by a planet which is in Sagittarius or Pisces, or the Moon, were joined by a planet which is in Scorpio or Capricorn. Whether a planet is joined by a planet which is in its descension, or that planet which is in the descension of another is joined by that planet whose descension it is, it always brings the matter forth to destruction and annuls it.

[When the Significator of a Matter is a Malefic]²

And [there is] also another thing which sends fear into matters, such as if a planet which is the significator of a matter should be a malefic, and it is manifest that the matter ought to be perfected by a [square] aspect³ or by opposition, because the querent is afraid lest some trouble may happen to him from this matter; for this reason he may wish rather that the matter not be perfected than that it be perfected [under these circumstances]. But if the aspect is a trine or a sextile with reception, the querent will be safe; but if it is without reception, it will not be as bad as the querent feared, although it is not so properly safe as the querent might wish.

In addition, if the significator of the querent and the significator of the matter sought for is the same planet, as often happens, and it is not received in the place in which it is, it signifies that the matter ought not to be perfected; but if it is received, it signifies that the matter ought to be perfected with a good perfection, unless the one which receives it is impeded by fall,⁴ combustion, or retrogradation, because although it is accomplished, it is not perfected with so good a perfection as when it is not impeded.

¹ *detrimentum*.

² This heading is also not in the original.

³ We have supplied *quadrato*. There seems to be no reason to separate off the opposition from all other aspects when the square is nearly as difficult. That this may be so is reinforced by the fact the sextile and trine are explicitly mentioned a bit further on as not being so bad. Otherwise the square would be the only aspect not mentioned in this connection.

⁴ In most of this text *casus* has signified detriment but again may mean either major debility.

There is another matter which is that planets which signify are assisted in the perfecting of some matter, to wit, when the signs agree in nature with the planets and will support them, and any of them may exhibit their testimonies through those planets.

And Zabel said that it is necessary that the ascending sign be fixed or common. Understand that the Ascendant should be diversified according to the diversity of persons beginning from the first house up to the 12th,¹ and the angles should not be remote² but firm,³ that is, so that the 10th house is the tenth sign from the ascending sign and the angle of the earth is the fourth sign from the ascending sign, so that the tenth house may not be the ninth sign from the Ascendant, nor the fourth house be the third sign from the Ascendant.⁴

By What Significations It Is Known Whether Matters Ought to Be Perfected.

Chapter III

It is necessary that you know the significations by which things are known, likewise whether they ought to be perfected or not. The first of these is [the signification of] the lord of the Ascendant. Second is [the signification of the] Moon because (as it is said elsewhere) she is a sharer in every matter. Third is [the signification of] that planet which signifies the matter sought for. When all of these are joined together, they signify the complete accomplishment of the matter in the houses which signify the matter. And you should always be mindful to diversify the Ascendants as I have said to you just now.

But if two of these, namely, the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the matter sought for, or the Moon and the lord of the matter sought for, are joined together, it signifies that the matter will be accomplished

¹ In other words, the various houses may be taken as "Ascendants" or more precisely "horoscopes" for different kinds of persons, depending upon their relation to the querent.

² I.e., one sign off from the "proper" sign relationship.

³ I.e., not "moved back" (*remotus*) but "firmly" established in its position.

⁴ This is most intriguing! There seems to have been a sense of tension between what comes from whole sign or equal houses and what happens with quadrant style houses. Unfortunately it tends to put charts cast in more extreme latitudes in an unfavorable light.

by the two sides. But if only one of them has born witness, it signifies that the matter sought for will be perfected by the querent through a third part.¹ Understand this in matters which admit of separation into parts² because if it is a matter which cannot be separated into parts, either it will be done completely or it will be done not at all. But if in matters which are not separable into parts, you have two of the aforesaid testimonies, announce a complete accomplishment of the matter sought for. But if you have only one of these, it is hardly ever perfected; but if it is perfected, it will be accomplished with difficulty and tardiness, and also with the greatest effort and complication. [These are matters] such as marriage which is done either completely or not at all, and similar matters.³ If I say marriage, it is a single marriage.⁴ For if there were several marriages [being considered] at the same time as it sometimes happens, because a question is asked about several women and several men, as when someone asks on his own behalf, on that of his father, his brother, his son, or anyone else, then it can be that some of these are perfected and some of these are not perfected accordingly as you see the significations and testimonies presenting themselves in the question.

And these three testimonies or significations⁵ must be considered in any matter; but if all of them are sound, any matter will undoubtedly be perfected in its entirety for the querent. For the significators, to wit, the lord of the Ascendant, the Moon, and the lord of the matter sought for, will be sound when they free from combustion, fall,⁶ retrogradation, [free] from the square aspect and opposition of malefics, and besieging

¹ *per tertia parte*. Or "through a third party." It is not clear from the context whether Bonatti means that the matter will be perfected only to one third of the maximum possible extent, or by a third party assisting. What follows suggests both possibilities.

² This and the other occurrences of the phrase are all translations of the verb *partior* and the related noun *partitio*. I have treated these words as if they were being used as exact synonyms of *divido* and *diviso*, two words which are very close in meaning to these words. It seems as if the intent is to distinguish between matters that may be fulfilled in varying degrees (which are 'parts') versus those which can only be fulfilled completely or not at all.

³ One is reminded of the old line, "It is difficult to be a little bit pregnant!"

⁴ That is, there is a question which relates to only one marriage.

⁵ Those rendered by the Lord of the Ascendant of querent, the Moon, and the lord of the matter sought for.

⁶ I.e., major debility.

by these, and also from the bodily conjunction of these which rarely happens.¹ And if along with the fact that they are sound, they are received by infortunes by any aspect whatever, the matter will be perfected, and to the good. But if they are received by fortunes, the good will be increased yet again almost as if the querent did not know how to put the question any more successfully, nor will he believe that the matter which he asked about could have been accomplished more completely. And you should not throw these words aside because they are competent in every matter, and they are useful for every question, and for everything which someone intends to do. However, much is discovered by considering the fixed stars which aid or do harm just as [is described] in the chapters which speak about these.

[The Second Part,] a Tractatus Begins Which Concerns the Particular Judgments of the Stars

**What Signifies the Person of the Querent and What Happens for
Him Concerning Any Question and Concerning Any Matter
Whatever That He Intends to Do or to Begin Inasmuch as
Asking a Question or Beginning [Something] Pertains to Him,
and Likewise Concerning Those Matters Which Naturally Seem
to Have Regard to This.**

Chapter I

In this first chapter we must treat concerning those matters which pertain to the first house or which seem to have regard to it. This the ascending sign, and it signifies the querent inasmuch as the question pertains to him, and I will say to you certain things which it is necessary for you to know about these matters. For questions can be posed which are different and of different kinds inasmuch as their qualities make them different; [and] questions can be made different with regard to their state of being² as when one question is about one matter and there is a second question [about a matter] different from that. They can also be different according to other different significa-

¹ I.e., it is unlikely that all three of the significators would be bodily conjunct malefics.

² *esse*.

tions, for someone asks a question one way when he asks a question on his own behalf, and another way when he asks on behalf of another. I shall also describe to you how you ought to look for each subject and likewise at which house when someone asks a question. For it does not always behoove you to look at the first house as the Ascendant of the signification of any question.

But perhaps you can say, "Why the did the ancient sages not set down [in writing] what you are saying?" The cause of this thing is this, for they left it for the industry of the wise, because they did not speak then in order to introduce, but [they spoke] to those who had been introduced, who were overflowing, wise, and instructed.

But if someone asks a question concerning himself, you *should* look at the first house. But if he asks about his own substance or about other matters signified by the second, you should look at the second house; if he asks about siblings or other matters signified by the third house, you should look at the third house; if he asks about his father or other matters signified by the fourth house, you should look at the fourth house; if he asks about his children or other matters signified by the fifth house, you should look at the fifth house; if he asks about his servants or other matters signified by the sixth house, you should look at the sixth house; if he asks about his wife or other matters signified by the seventh house, you should look at the seventh house; if he asks about his death or other matters signified by the eighth house, you should look at the eighth house; if he asks about religion or other matters signified by the ninth house, you should look at the ninth house; if he asks about kingship¹ or other matters signified by the tenth house, you should look at the tenth house; if he asks about his friends or other matters signified by the eleventh house, you should look at the eleventh house; if he asks about hidden enemies or other matters signified by the twelfth house, you should look at the twelfth house. And you should always remember these principles.²

¹ Or the kingdom.

² This is yet another example of Bonatti's style of writing that modern readers may find tedious. We should regard this as a didactic style of rhetoric designed to drill the point into the mind of the student. Remember, as he implied in the previous paragraph, Bonatti, unlike his "ancient sages", is writing for beginners!

How You Should Observe the Shadow When Questions Are Put to You.

Chapter II

Whenever you are asked about something concerning which a questioner wishes to question, take the altitude of the Sun if the interrogation is diurnal. But if it is nocturnal, you will take the altitude of some fixed star placed on the astrolabe¹ (or [take the altitude] with another instrument suited for this task) as exactly as is possible, immediately without any delay or any intervening interval² when the word goes forth from the mouth of the one asking the question.³ And beware lest you should deviate in some way, lest some error should fall into the matter about which there is a question for you because of a delay.

And observe the method which I have described to you in looking at that house which signifies the matter sought for. And beware lest you should mix up at the same time different matters which have been asked about at different times. For if a question given to you is posed about a marriage, and when you get that question, that same person (or perhaps another person) after only a little while asks another question, whatever kind it may be, do not mix together the second question with the other [first question] which has already been gotten, because the Ascendant has already been altered, and thus it is necessary that the judgment be altered. Therefore in this way you may be deceived in a blameworthy manner in your judgment. But nevertheless you can take this [second question] with the altitude properly taken by you, and there will be a judgment other than the first.⁴

¹ For those not familiar with astrolabes, all astrolabes had fixed star positions marked on them permanently for various kinds of sighting.

² *aliquo medio*.

³ This is the 13th Century. No reliable clocks! Of course one could use a sundial, but taking the altitude of a body to determine the time only requires knowing whether the body is before or after its meridian transit. One does not even have to know exactly which way south is.

⁴ Given the difficulties of taking the time and erecting the chart, it would have been a temptation for the medieval astrologer to use a chart a second time for a question that was asked only a short time after the first. This does not appear to be a prohibition about answering two questions with the same chart so long as no *significant* amount of time separates the two charts. See the next paragraph.

Nevertheless, from this¹ you can accept several questions of several headings under one Ascendant if the one asking the questions will have thought about them and kept them in his mind through a day or through a day and a night such that whole of heaven has revolved at least once,² provided that the questions are different, so that one question may not be about a matter about which there is another question.

And likewise beware lest the one who asks the question comes to you for the sake of trying or deceiving you, as sometimes certain persons are wont to do, or he does not keep the question in his heart through a day and a night as I have elsewhere said if you recall.³ For

¹ "From this" translates a rather indistinctly printed abbreviation which appears to be one of the standard forms of *inde*. But the reading is not secure.

² see note 3 on the next page.

³ This and the previous mention of keeping a question through a day and a night are references to the second consideration of the Fifth Tractate.

"The second consideration is about the method which anyone who wishes to ask something of an astrologer ought to observe. And it is that when he wishes to ask an astrologer concerning matters present, past, or future, it is necessary that he observe this manner of asking, namely, that he ought to pray earnestly to the Lord God from whom every good draws a beginning, and that with all devotion and a contrite spirit he entreats that the Lord God grant to him that he may attain knowledge of the truth of those matters concerning which he intends to inquire. Thereupon the one who is about to inquire should go to the astrologer with the intention of [obtaining] the truth about the matter about which he which desires [to know], and concerning which he proposes to inquire. And he should retain the intention of doing this in his own heart through a day and a night or more, not moved by any motion of the mind whatever as sometimes many ignorant persons are wont to do, as is spoken of elsewhere; and he who has spoken in this way, who has given [this] that you might inquire, will increase [the likelihood] that you will find [the truth]. I think that it ought to be done in this manner concerning any interrogation unless [as is] sometimes [the case] there may perhaps be an unexpected happening that suddenly emerges, which may compel an unexpected question, and a quick response to be made which does not admit of delay, as happens many times; yet, may the Name of the Highest always be the beginning of this [asking of a question]; indeed since some persons sometimes do otherwise and become the cause of the deceiving of themselves, they also force the astrologer sometimes, indeed often, to speak falsely; for the foolish querent sometimes causes the sage who answers to deviate [from the truth]; and men, who are ignorant of the foolishness of him who has asked badly,

matters proceed according to the quantity of solicitude, hope, and the faith of the questioner. For if someone asks about some matter, the houses and places of the planets, and their disposition, signify what will be concerning a matter which the querent himself seeks wholly in accord with the time of his life. [It is] likewise in nativities,¹ although nativities sometimes may be altered by the revolution of the years, sometimes according to increase, sometimes according to decrease. And [it is likewise] in universal questions² concerning fortune, to wit, whether someone's question is perpetual,³ or is determined to the year, month (one or several), or to the week, day, or similar periods of time; because anyone who is doing something intends some end of his actions, and acts according to the pressing demand of the purposes of those intentions, and according to a purpose which he knows ahead of time. Let this also be known to you, because each person who asks a question does not ask a question except about this and according to that which the planets, signs, and their dispositions have mastery over in the root⁴ of his nativity concerning any good or evil.

What Is the Trunk, and What Are the Branches of this Tree. Chapter III

For questions are the trunks of this tree; the considerations which it is necessary for you to have concerning questions are the tree's branches. And considering in this way, you will look at how the lord of the Ascendant is made fortunate in any question, any nativity, and in any beginning of any matter, whatever it may be, and by what the Moon is made fortunate, and by what the lord of the house which signifies the

defame and despise the astrologer when the astrologer is not worthy of blame that he should be defamed and despised."

¹ When one consults a nativity for the purpose of dealing with a specific aspect of the someone's life.

² In Section 2 of our Bonatti edition, a universal question was described as a technique whereby a horary question is asked to answer a concern that would normally be answered by a birthchart, but no such chart is available. It differs from a standard horary question in that it is not intended to answer a question that is limited to the time of the question.

³ I.e., a question that is relevant for one's entire lifetime.

⁴ *radix*.

matter about which there is a question is made fortunate. Because no one asks a question except according to this which I have just now described to you, and according to that [he will not ask] unless perchance he would seek knowledge. For [otherwise] you should not look on his behalf, as is said elsewhere. For no one is born or asks a question in a good hour and under a good and fortunate Ascendant unless he is fortunate, and one whom good and fortunate things ought to surround. And no one is born or asks a question under an evil and unfortunate Ascendant unless he is an unfortunate man, and one whom evil and misfortune ought to surround. Thence it is that we see some persons who are fortunate, some persons who are unfortunate.

The Astrologer Ought Not to Look for Himself. Chapter IV

It has been said by the ancient sages and especially by Messahalla that an astrologer ought not to look on his own behalf lest by chance he may be deceived in his own question, because it will hardly ever happen but that he has some remorse concerning the Ascendant; therefore it is necessary that the astrologer should question another astrologer according to the method described above. But after this other astrologer will have taken up his question, the first astrologer will be able to look on his own behalf and to judge his own question; or [the astrologer who is asking a question on his own behalf] should give his question to another person (either in writing or without writing) namely, to such a one who will be solicitous concerning his affairs, and that one should afterwards present the matter [to the second astrologer] for the first astrologer, according to his own movement when he wishes. Or [otherwise] he might put [the question] in his own mind saying, "When such and such a sign presents itself to me, let it be for the Ascendant of a question which I intend to make for myself," and it will be just as good.¹

Wherefore if there is a question about a matter which should endure, or be stable, or which ought to be made better or made worse, or be

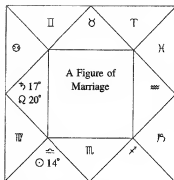
¹ Which is to say, not very good. Here we have the central difference between horary and electional astrology. In horary the time must be random, whereas in elections the time is intentional.

finished quickly or to be altered, one must look then at the lord of the Ascendant, and one must see whether it is joined to the lord of the matter sought for, or whether the lord of the matter sought for is joined to it, and by which aspect; because if they are joined by trine or sextile, and in the angles, or from the angles or succedents, it signifies the accomplishment of the matter sought for; it also signifies durability, stability and its betterment, and the more to the good if the aspect is with reception because then it signifies every goodness for the matter without any lessening. But if the aspect is a square, it will take away very much from the intention of the querent and from the goodness and durability of the matter, even if it is with reception. It will also take away if there is a trine or sextile without reception, although less severely. If there is a square or opposition without reception, it signifies the destruction of the matter and that there will be no good or durability in it.

But if the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the matter sought for are joined to some planet which is more ponderous than they, and it receives their disposition and aspects the Ascendant, or it aspects some planet which aspects the Ascendant, and which has some dignity in the Ascendant, and it is itself not impeded, it signifies goodness and the accomplishment of the matter, durability and stability. But if the receiver of the disposition does not aspect the Ascendant, nor is it joined to the planet which aspects the Ascendant from its own place, it will be evil, for it signifies the annulment, badness and destruction of the matter. However if the lord of the Ascendant is more ponderous than the lord of the matter sought for, and the lord of the matter sought for is joined to it with a good aspect, or from any aspect whatever with perfect reception, except the opposition, it signifies the goodness and durability of the matter. Likewise if the lord of the matter sought for is more ponderous than the lord of the Ascendant, and the lord of the Ascendant is joined to it with perfect reception, it signifies the goodness and durability of the matter. You should understand the same about the conjunction with the lord of the matter sought for if the lord of the matter sought for is not joined with the lord of the Ascendant. And always you should understand this, that the significators, both the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the matter sought for, and the receiver of the disposition, and the Moon, should be free from the malefics and

their impediments.¹

For example, a certain question was asked concerning a marriage, whether it would be perfected or not, and the Ascendant of this question was 20 degrees of Leo, Saturn



in Leo at 17 degrees, the Sun in Libra at 14 degrees. This signifies that the matter would be accomplished and perfected without contradiction because both of the signifiers received the other; and [it signifies] that its perfection would be good and durable, and

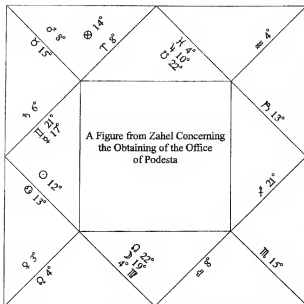
likewise peaceful and happy. You should say the same about other questions.²

But if the Sun were placed in 20 degrees in Libra, and Saturn in Aries at 25 degrees, even though both of the signifiers receive the other, it signifies the impediment of the matter (of whatever kind the matter sought for may be; and [it signifies] the diminution of the good which was signified because of the reception, and that it would be perfected with difficulty. And if it were perfected, it would be perfected with force, the greatest effort, and anxiety, and still the perfection will not be good or durable; to the contrary it is seen that it is destroyed after its perfection. And if it is not destroyed in an evil way, it will not endure in quiet because the aspect is from the opposition and both of the signifiers are impeded.³

¹ The material in the preceding paragraphs is more or less a recapitulation of the material beginning on page 11.

² The sextile overcomes the fact that the reception is not particularly potent the problem being that the planets are receiving each other while in their own major debilities. See page 14.

³ Here the poor quality of the reception is not sufficient to salvage the fact that the aspect is an opposition.



A certain soldier asked whether he would obtain the office of *podesta*¹ in that year; and his question was absolute² because he did not specify which office, yet he was hoping to get a certain special one. The Ascendant of his question was Gemini, 21 degrees; Cancer was the second house. 13 degrees; Leo the third house, 4 degrees; Virgo the fourth house. 4 degrees; Libra the fifth house, 8 degrees; Scorpio the

¹ *potestaria*. In Bonatti's time this was a type of military governorship established under the Holy Roman Empire. There were other offices with this title but given Bonatti's times and places, this is the most likely reference.

² See my General Note on the terms 'absolute' and 'determinate' as they regard to questions.

sixth house, 15 degrees.¹ The other 6 houses were in the opposition of the aforesaid. The positions of the planets were thus: For Saturn was in Gemini, 6 degrees; Jupiter in Pisces, 20 degrees, stationary; Mars in Taurus, 8 degrees; the Sun in Cancer, 12 degrees; Venus in Leo, 3 degrees; Mercury in Gemini, 27 degrees; the Moon in Virgo, 19 degrees; the Dragon's Head in Virgo, 22 degrees, the Dragon's Tail in its opposition; and the Part of Fortune in Aries, 14 degrees.

He himself asked this question, therefore I looked at the Ascendant, its lord, and the Moon, which are the significators of the querent. The Midheaven and its lord are the significators of the matter sought for. And Mercury, which is the significator of the querent, was in the first house, namely, in the Ascendant near the end of the sign; and Mercury was separated from Jupiter, which is the significator of the matter sought for. This signifies that he will not get the office of *podesta* in that year.

Thereupon I began to work by means of the Moon, which was in the opposition of the Jupiter signifying the matter sought for. Wherefore inasmuch as it is from this, that the Moon² was being joined to Jupiter, it signifies that the querent would obtain the office in that year (even though it was a joining together by opposition) but with effort and uneasiness and also opposition, anxiety and the greatest worry, which would not have happened to him if his joining together [of the significators] were by the trine or sextile aspect; on the contrary, he would have gotten it easily and without effort, and also with the greatest swiftness.

Thereupon I looked at Jupiter, the significator of the matter sought for; and he was in a house signifying the matter about which there was the question, which would signify the accomplishment of the matter if Jupiter himself were to be in a good state and well disposed, but Jupiter was in his own first station seeking to go retrograde. Therefore even though Jupiter received the disposition of the Moon, still because of his own debility, he could not retain it; this shows that the one who labored

¹ Notice the way in which these positions are phrased Bonatti, after Zachel, does not say, "... the second house was 13 degrees of Cancer." He said, "... Cancer was the second house 13 degrees." And he did this for all of the houses. This seemingly minor detail of the phrasing may have enormous importance for our understanding of the way in which houses were handled in Medieval astrology. See note 3, page 29.

² Reading *ipsa* for *ipse*.

at this in order that the matter be perfected could not bring it to pass. And so the evil disposition of Jupiter signified the destruction of the matter sought for and its annihilation; it seemed that the person who then was the *podesta*¹ might be the cause whereby the querent would not obtain [the office]. [This is] because Jupiter, which destroyed the matter, was the lord of the tenth house, which signified the *podesta*.

If it had been the lord of the eleventh house that was impeded, it might be seen that the harm and destruction of the matter ought to have come about on because of some friend of the querent. And if it had been the lord of the 12th house, it might happen because of someone who pretended to be his friend although he was a hidden enemy. And if the lord of the Ascendant were the receiver of the disposition which impeded and which was impeded, this might signify that the same one who asked the question would be the cause of the destruction of the matter sought for because he might perpetrate that deed whereby the matter would not be accomplished and perfected for him.

And because the lord of the Ascendant was being moved from his own domicile² into another, it was signified through the lord's position that the questioner was moving within a short time; and because the lord was being moved to the second house,³ it was seen that the move

¹ Reading *potestaria* for *potestas*.

² *a domo sua*. Mercury is moving into Cancer from Gemini.

³ The reader should notice that Mercury is regarded as being about to change houses when by our reckoning it is only about to change signs. The cusp of the second house is some distance away at 13° ♊. If houses were being measured from cusp to cusp, as is the modern practice, or even from 5° prior to the cusp to 5° prior to the next cusp, which is a common Medieval and modern variant on that principle, we would not regard Mercury as being about to change houses. But this statement, combined with the curious way in which Bonatti has given the houses positions (see note 1, page 28 above), strongly suggests that the whole sign of Cancer is the second house, not merely the section from 13° ♊ forward into the next sign. What is radical for our understanding of this is that the house system in this chart is a quadrant system, not equal or whole-sign. But the function of the house cusps here is not to determine where the houses begin but which signs the houses fall into. But the signs are the houses, not the cusp-to-cusp range of longitudes. This makes the house cusps of quadrant systems operate in the same way as Greek lots, as *horoscopi* which designate a sign as being the first house of twelve houses which pertain to some aspect of life.

It is not clear whether this is Bonatti's way of dealing with the cusps. The

would be in order to acquire for himself substance which he did not have. And it was seen that the move for the sake of acquiring money for himself would be made to a certain place in which he had already remained at another time. In addition it was seen that Mars, which was the lord of the sixth house, would be harmful to him so that the matter might not be accomplished for him, because it was seen that querent might sicken in the place to which intended to go; and this was signified by Mars, which received the lord of the Ascendant; indeed Mars made the native unfortunate. But if the querent were not made infirm, [something else] might happen: Things might happen because he himself did something in advance which would be the cause whereby he might not obtain the sought for office. Also servants or other subordinates of his who opposed him might arise against him so that he would not obtain the office. Or by chance it might be the people and others of the vulgar who have no other employment except raising a clamor and spreading rumors, who do not know what they are shouting about.

Likewise it was signified by Jupiter, the significator of the matter sought for, that there might happen to the querent some harm or grief because of which he would not obtain the dignity. And although he himself had not expressed that he had an intention of obtaining the office, nevertheless Mercury, which was his significator, was seen to indicate that he himself already had had hope in this matter because Mercury was at the time being separated from Jupiter, the significator of the matter sought for. Wherefore it was seen that he was already placed almost [in a state of] desperation, but he had not become completely desperate because of the fact that Mercury, even though it was separated from Jupiter the lord of the tenth house, nevertheless still aspected Jupiter.

From this you may be able to say to him that, although he might pretend to be ignorant about that which he himself seeks, he knew very well about the matter concerning which he had had hope, and was having doubts that he might not be able accomplish the matter. And just as I have said to you concerning this office of *podesta*, so you should understand about any matter which may be signified by any of the 12

example is taken from Zabei a Jewish astrologer of the Arabic period who died between 822 and 850. He is one of the earliest of the Arabic era astrologers along with Messahalla, Omar, and Abu Ali. Therefore this could represent a very early way of dealing with quadrant house cusps.

houses.

**In This We Look at Planets Which Impede Matters So That
They Do Not Happen.
Chapter V**

Although perhaps it might seem more appropriate for me to put this chapter elsewhere, nevertheless, it seems that it must be placed here because if it were postponed until the treatise on nativities, you could have need for it in several [other] places [beforehand]; for it does not only have a place in nativities but also in all interrogations, in [undertaking] all journeys, and in all inceptions of anything whatever that we wish or intend to do.

And it is that you should look at the planet which impedes matters so that they do not happen, or so that they are not perfected. And this planet can be called strongly harmful, prohibiting, destroying, or an abscissor¹ because it is that planet which cuts off the native's life, and destroys it, nor does it permit the native to attain a long life (to wit, to old age), or it corrupts the matter and destroys it after it is thought to be all right, and it seems that it ought to be perfected; this planet is what our ancients called the abscissor or planet which cuts off. And you should look at this planet in nativities and in questions in order that you should know whether matters ought to be perfected or not, and [whether or not] they should come to the proper outcome.

And we take this from the planet with which the lord of the Ascendant or the significator of the matter sought for is being joined, or [with which] the Moon [is being joined], whether she is a sharer with the lord of the Ascendant or is the significatrix of the matter sought for.

For you should consider the planet to which is being joined the significator of the querent, or the significator of the matter sought for, or the Moon, and see how that planet may be disposed and to which [other planet] said planet is being joined,² because if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, or the significator of the matter sought for, is being joined to a malefic which is also badly disposed without

¹ A planet which cuts off, hence the verb in the next clause.

² *coniungitur*. But this is clearly a case where the word means being joined by any aspect as well as the bodily conjunction, not merely the bodily conjunction.

reception, or if that planet is not badly disposed but is being joined to another malefic badly disposed which does not receive it, this signifies the destruction of the matter sought for. Moreover I understand a badly disposed malefic planet to be peregrine, retrograde, combust, and cadent from the Ascendant, or [cadent from] from the house of the matter sought for such that it does not aspect that house or even the lord of the house (however, the aspect to the house is stronger than the aspect to its lord in this matter), or [it is a planet] which is in its fall or descension. Indeed, that planet is the one which is called the planet which cuts off or the destroyer.¹

In addition if the significator of the querent, or of the matter sought for, or the Moon, or the planet to which the Moon is being joined (whether she is herself a significatrix or a sharer with the lord of the Ascendant), is joined to any planet which has been rendered unfortunate, that is, retrograde, combust, or cadent, you will look to see whether at that time reception intervenes, because the perfection of the matter sought for is signified even though with difficulty and fatigue. But if reception does not intervene, it signifies the corruption and destruction of the matter, and that it will not be perfected after it will be thought to be all right.

If however that planet which receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, or the lord of the matter sought for, or a planet to which any of these are being joined, is free [from the malefics], not rendered unfortunate, nor are either the receiving or received planet [rendered unfortunate], it signifies the perfection of the matter with ease.

And if the planet to which is joined the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, or the lord of the matter sought for, is free from the malefics, but it has been joined to a good planet that is being joined [in turn] by a malefic which is impeded and does not receive it, the matter will not be perfected and it will not come to a good end. And in this manner you should understand [any] planet among the seven planets. You should always understand this if these conjunctions² happen without reception because with reception it is perfected, although with weariness. But if having taken this into consideration beforehand, some planet cuts off the light of some one of the aforesaid good planets when it desires to be joined to the malefic, that takes away the harm and the

¹ *destructor*. This is a literal translation of the Greek *anairētēs*, or in the Latinized form *anaereta*.

² By aspect or bodily.

matter is not prohibited, rather the matter is perfected. But if an abscission [of light] does not intervene, the matter is prohibited and not perfected, and if it is perfected, it is [still] destroyed. Moreover if reception does intervene, you will consider this, that the reception should not be from the opposition or square aspect, because if then the planet is badly disposed, that reception which is from the square or opposition aspect does not assist; and [this is so] especially if the receiving planet is impeded. But if the reception is by trine or sextile, it prevails and one trusts that the matter should then be perfected. If however the planet which receives should at the time be well disposed, that reception will perfect the matter by any aspect whatever, nor does the square or opposition cause hindrance. Moreover if it is by trine or sextile, it completes the matter inasmuch as that planet to which the significator is joined is well disposed, whether it is with reception or without reception, on the condition however that the aspect or conjunction is not already completed such that the [aspect or conjunction] begins to be separated in any manner. And if the significator is being joined with a fortune which is not impeded, the matter is also perfected.

And if any of the planets transfers light or virtue between a significator and another planet, and that planet to which it transfers [the light or virtue] is an infortune, and that infortune is impeded as has been described, the matter is corrupted unless the malefic impeding or receiving is again received.

If indeed the significator of the querent, or the Moon, and the significator of the matter sought for, are joined to some planet which collects the light of both, and that planet is an infortune or has been rendered unfortunate, it destroys the matter and does not permit it to be perfected unless it receives both of the significators itself; even if it receives one of them, the matter will still be destroyed.

You should also consider whether the significator of the querent may be found in the house of the matter sought for or going to the conjunction¹ of its lord, because this signifies that the querent is going toward the matter sought for. But if the significator of the matter sought for is found in the Ascendant or going to conjunction with the significator of the querent, this signifies that the matter sought for may come toward the querent; however [this should be] with the receptions,

¹ This is probably not limited to a bodily conjunction.

aspects, and the Moon remaining in their [current] state.¹

[The Third Part,] Concerning the Second House²

Concerning Substance Which the Querent Hopes to Obtain for Himself.

Chapter I

If anyone asks of you whether or not he will obtain substance which he hopes for, you will know from this what kind of substance it may be which he intends to have or to acquire; look then at the Ascendant and its lord, and the Moon, which are generally the signifiers of the one asking the question. And you should not deceive yourself about this, because whichever person it may be who asks a question of you concerning substance that he hopes to acquire is given to you by the first house, whether it is a king or otherwise, a cleric or lay-person, whether a pope or any prelate, or a noble or any other person whatever; because no one has a prerogative in this case, nor is condition, nor rank, nor sex preferred. All persons are equal in this respect as long as anyone asks a question for himself. And you will give the second sign and its lord to substance unless otherwise the querent specifies otherwise.

If the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is being joined to the lord of the house of substance, or the lord of the house of substance to the lord of the Ascendant, or the lord of the house of substance is in the Ascendant, or the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is in the house of substance, or the Moon, or some other one of the planets, is transferring light between the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the house of substance (to wit, the light of one of them to the other), it signifies that the querent will obtain the substance about which he has inquired. And if this is not [the case] concerning the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, or the lord of substance, then see if Jupiter, which is the natural signifier of substance, or Venus, which is by

¹ One does not want any of the other indications which support perfection changing into something else while the applications mentioned above are taking place.

² The first house has actually already been covered in the material just preceding.

nature a fortune, or the Head of the Dragon without the aspect of any infortune, is in the house of substance, [for then] he will gain and acquire the substance. You should understand the same if the question concerning substance is absolute, to wit, so that the querent does not specify otherwise in his questioning except that he may say, "Will I acquire substance or not." You should examine just as you have examined above.

But if you do not find anything concerning substance, say to him that he will not find substance but he will remain in his [present] state unless there are malefics (which are Mars, Saturn, and the Tail of the Dragon) in the house of substance without the aspect of any fortune, which have to destroy the substance unless by chance these planets are themselves received by the lord of the house of substance, or they are themselves the lords of said house, and otherwise in good state, not retrograde, nor combust, nor in any other way impeded, because then that diminishes their malice. And if the Tail of the Dragon is also with them in the house of substance, their malice will be increased, and worse things will be brought about. And of the Tail of the Dragon is in the house of substance with fortunes, the Tail takes away much from their goodness and also takes away one quarter part of the substance after it had been acquired, and sometimes more. And if you find any of the malefics in the house of substance in a bad state, if you find the Moon void in course, or joining herself to malefics which impede her, it will signify this, that the querent will not acquire the substance within the entire span of his life; rather he will see that what he has will be diminished and that in the future he always will be indigent and a beggar.

**From Whence He Will Acquire Substance, and Wherefore He
Will Lose It, and for What Reason.
Chapter II**

However, if you see that the querent will obtain substance, and you wish to see from whence he will obtain it and for what reason, or that he is going to lose it, [and] for what reason he will lose it, look then to the planets that I have previously described to you which have a share in the matter of substance; and you will consider that planet to which the other is being joined because the planet which is more ponderous, to which the other is being joined, will signify by what means and from

whence the querent will acquire substance. You should likewise look [to see] of which house that ponderous planet (to which the other planet is being joined) is the lord; and see in which house is that ponderous planet which receives the disposition, to wit, that planet to which the other is being joined; because if it is in the Ascendant or it is the lord of the Ascendant, the querent will acquire substance through the labor of his own hands and with his own person.

But if it is in the second house or it is the lord of the second house, he will acquire it with his own substance, just as [it is done] by merchants and like who work with their own business to acquire other things which they do not possess.

If it is in the third house or it is the lord of the third house, the querent will acquire substance from his siblings. But if his siblings do not possess [any substance], he will acquire substance from neighbors, or from people who live in the same city with him, or from certain acquaintances who pretend to be friends, although they are not complete friends, or [he will acquire substance] on account of [any of] the aforesaid.

And if it is in the fourth house or it is the lord of the fourth house, the querent will acquire substance from his father, or grandfather, or from his father-in-law, or from another of his elders from whom he is descended; but if such parents do not possess [substance], the querent will acquire substance from lands and estates, or immoveable possessions.

And if it is the fifth house or it is the lord of the fifth house, the querent will acquire substance from his children; but if he does not have children, he will acquire substance from certain persons from whom he holds a trust¹ because they cause him to make a profit even though they are not true friends.

And if it is in the sixth house or it is the lord of the sixth house, and the sixth house is a human sign, the querent will acquire substance from his servants and minor dependents;² but if servants and minor dependents do not possess substances, the querent will obtain substance from smaller, domestic animals, such as sheep, goats, pigs and the like, if the sixth sign is quadrupedal; and if he does not possess animals, he will acquire substance through infirmities or, at all events, from vile

¹ As in moneys held in trust.

² *clientulis*. That is, clients in the sense of persons who are dependent upon one, not clients in the sense that a consultant would use the word.

persons.

And if it is in the seventh house or it is the lord of the seventh house, the querent will acquire substance from women¹ if the seventh sign is feminine; or he will acquire substance from enemies or perhaps battles; or he will acquire substance from partners, or from a dispute which he will have with some persons.

And if it is in the eighth house or it is the lord of the eighth house, the querent will acquire substance from the goods of his wife and from inheritances from the dead; or he will acquire substance in alien lands to which he goes of his own free will without being forced.

And if it is in the ninth house or it is the lord of the ninth house, the querent will acquire substance from religious persons (and if not from religious persons, reckon all clerks² as holy persons), or because of religion, or because of the teaching of divinity; or he will acquire substance because of long journeys to regions far distant from his own country, just as the Venetians, Pisans, Genoans, Florentines, and all similar peoples accustomed to long journeys.

And if it is in the tenth house or it is the lord of the tenth house, the querent will acquire substance from kings; and if he does not acquire substance from kings, he will acquire it from other great men; or he will acquire it from offices or from becoming a *podesta* if he is the kind of person for whom it is fitting that he should have that office; or if he is not such a person who is suitable for this, he will acquire substance from his own magistracies with his own honor.³

And if it is in the eleventh house or it is the lord of the eleventh house, the querent will acquire substance from his friends or from certain persons in whom he has great hope; or he will acquire substance from merchants with whom he associates both in his own country or in foreign ones, however, preferably in his own country and from matters which come for him unexpectedly through his own luck.

And if it is in the twelfth house or it is the lord of the twelfth house, the querent will acquire substance from hidden enemies or from

¹ *mulieribus*. There is an ambiguity here in that *mulier* can be either a woman or a wife. However below under the eighth house where he unambiguously refers to the "goods of his wife," the word *uxor* is used. This leads us to believe that the word should be translated as 'women' here.

² Clerks were originally clerics.

³ It is curious but typical of the Middle Ages that this should be last thing that Bonatti would list. One simply did not get ahead on one's own.

those who have been placed under arrest if the twelfth sign is human. But if the twelfth sign is one of the quadrupedal signs, [he will acquire substance] from large animals; if it is Taurus, from cattle; if it is the latter half of Sagittarius, from horses or beasts of burden.

However, you should not forget this, that in whichever house you may find the Tail of the Dragon with a significator, it always takes away something from what is signified. And if you find the Dragon's Head in that place, it will increase what is signified. I except what has been said about the [Head and the Tail] above concerning their significations in the second house.¹

Concerning the Causes Whereby the Querent Will Not Acquire Substance. Chapter III

If indeed it does not seem that the querent should acquire substance, and you wish to know the reason whereby he will not obtain it, [and] what is the cause which prevents it so that he does not acquire substance, look at the receiver of the disposition, just as I have told you above in that same chapter.² And if it is the lord of the Ascendant which prohibits the acquisition of substance, the querent himself, the same one who asked the question, will be the reason that he does not obtain substance. And if it is the lord of the second, his substance will be the reason that he does not obtain substance.³ If it is the lord of the third, brothers will be the reason that he does not obtain substance. And understand in this manner concerning the significators of all of the houses, that each will be the reason in its own place and time that substance is not obtained by the querent according to what has been said, that each house is the cause of obtaining according by that same method [of considering] up to the end of the twelve houses. These are the significations of the twelve houses; wherefore wherever you find the significator of substance, according to that house you should judge the obtaining of substance; and wherever you will find the prohibitor of the substance according to that house, you should judge the prohibition of

¹ Recall that the nodes have their own special significations when they are in the second house as mentioned above.

² See chapter V above.

³ As for example when someone's assets are not liquid.

substance such that it is not acquired by the querent. So you should look by means of all of the houses at the significations of all matters which pertain to you.

Likewise a master whom God ordained said that if a question is absolute, or [if] it is not said from what source substance should to be had, we should set up the Ascendant and the house of substance, which is the second from the Ascendant as has been said elsewhere; and we should look at the lord of the house of life, which is the lord of the Ascendant; if you find that it aspects the Ascendant or if it is joined to a planet which returns its light to the Ascendant, then we should work by means of it; if this planet does not aspect the Ascendant, nor does it aspect some planet which aspects and returns its light to the Ascendant, then we should look at the Moon; if she aspects the Ascendant and returns her light to the Ascendant, [we should] work by means of the Moon. But if the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, do not aspect the Ascendant, nor have they been joined to a planet which aspects the Ascendant, then we should see which of these (namely, the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon) has more degrees in the sign in which it is, [and] which one ought to go out of the sign in which it is the more swiftly and enter into another; and through that one we ought to work. And if it is seen that the planet, after it has gone out of the sign in which it was, is joined to the lord of the house of substance without anything between before another is joined to it or it to another, the aforesaid philosopher said that the querent will obtain substance whether the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, after its movement from the sign in which it was to the next sign, is received by the lord of substance or not.¹ And he does not relate whether the lord of the house of substance is a fortune or an infortune because the joining together of the lord of the Ascendant or of the Moon with lord of the house of substance causes the obtaining of the matter, to wit, of the sought for substance. Nevertheless, you should look to see lest the lord of the house of substance is joined to some planet, or some planet is joined to it, before the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined to that planet to which the lord of the house of substance commits its disposition. And because of this I have said, "without anything between," so that some planet does not cut off the light nor prohibit the joining together of the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, with the lord

¹ Here we have an exception to the rule that applications across sign boundaries are not allowed.

of the house of substance. But if a question is made concerning a substance which has been determined,¹ see by which house that substance about which the question was asked is signified; and see if the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, or either of these, may be joined with the lord of the house which signifies the matter, because the obtaining of the matter sought for will happen on account of the conjunction of the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, with the lord of the house signifying the matter about which there was a question.

But if there is not a joining together of lord of the Ascendant, or Moon, with the lord of the house signifying the matter sought for, then look in all matters (just as I have said to you) upon the joining together of the lord of the house of substance in the movement from sign to sign, and in the joining together with the lord of that matter concerning which there was a question.

But if the lord of the house of substance or of the matter sought for commits its disposition to another planet before it is itself joined with the lord of the Ascendant, or the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined to it, see which planet it is to which is being joined the lord of the house of substance, or of the matter sought for, and say that that planet is the significator of the impediment whereby the matter is not perfected; and see of which house it is the lord because that person who is signified by that house will strive to make it so that the matter is not perfected, and especially if that planet is impeded to which the lord of the house of substance committed disposition, that is, if it is retrograde, combust, in its fall, in its descension, or cadent from the angles.

But if that receiver of the disposition (to which is joined the lord of the house of substance or of the matter sought for) is not impeded by any of the aforesaid impediments, and it is a fortune, it will not impede; rather the matter sought for may be perfected whether it receives the lord of the Ascendant or not.

But if it is a malefic, and it is not impeded by any of the aforesaid impediments, and it receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, the matter likewise will be perfected according to the aspect by which it has been received.

But if that malefic does not receive the lord of the Ascendant and there is a joining together by the trine or sextile aspect, the matter will be perfected although with effort and tardiness; and if the joining

¹ That is, some particular kind of substance rather than the substance in general.

together is by the square aspect or by opposition, the matter sought for will be perfected with great difficulty, and if it is perfected, it will be with such great anxiety and with such effort for the querent that he will often say, "Would that I had not meddled¹ in this matter."

But if reception intervenes, the matter will be perfected. If it is a fortune which receives, the matter will be accomplished easily and quickly. If it is a malefic which receives, the matter will be accomplished with oppression and tardiness. And in no way can it be that a matter is not perfected if reception intervenes; and there will be nothing that can prohibit the matter so that it does not happen unless the querent desires to desist from what has been proposed so that it is not perfected.²

But if the receiver of the disposition is in an angle, the accomplishment of the matter will speed up; if in a succedent, it will be retarded, and will speed up less; but if [it is] in cadent houses, it will be prolonged again even though there is reception. Nevertheless, reception has such strength that it does not permit a matter to be annulled; even though it may be retarded, it does at last come to the sought for outcome whether the question is about substance or about anything else whatever.

In addition, if the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, or one of these, are joined to the lord of the house of substance or the matter sought for, or if they are joined to a fortune which is in the house of substance or the matter sought for, the querent will obtain that matter or substance.

And if there is not some one of these (to wit, the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon) joined to a fortune in the house of substance, but it is joined to a malefic which is in the house of substance or of the matter sought for, and that malefic receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, the matter will be accomplished and [the person signified by] the lord of the Ascendant, or the querent, will acquire the substance.³

¹ Reading *intromississem* for *intronusissem*.

² Even when the probable outcome is good, the querent's free will can cause the matter not to be perfected.

³ There seems to be a bit of text missing here which we have reconstructed in the bracketed text. The Latin reads as follows: *et acquirit eam dominus ascendentis seu querens*. The problem is that while a querent can clearly acquire something, it is not clear how the lord of the Ascendant can do this.

And if that malefic does not receive the lord of the Ascendant, nor the Moon, if that malefic has dignity in the house of substance or of the matter sought for, still the querent will acquire the substance or the matter sought for although it may be delayed in the span of time.

And if the lord of the house of substance or of the matter sought for is swifter than the lord of the Ascendant and has been joined to it, or any other planet which is in the house of substance or of the matter sought for likewise is swifter than the lord of the Ascendant, and is being joined to it by a trine or sextile aspect, the substance will be acquired, or the matter sought for will be accomplished with ease. But if the joining together is by the square aspect, the matter will be accomplished in a like manner without great gravity if reception intervenes. But if the lord of the Ascendant is swifter and is being joined to the lord of the second house, or the lord of the matter sought for, the matter will not be accomplished easily, nor without the suit of the querent.

If the lord of the matter sought for is being joined to the lord of the Ascendant or of the querent and receives it by trine or sextile aspect, the substance or matter sought for will come to the querent more than the querent hoped and more easily.

But if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is not joined to the lord of the house of substance or of the matter sought for, nor to any planet which is in that house, then you should see to which of the planets the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is being joined; because if any of these is being joined to a well-disposed fortune which is not impeded, or it is in an angle, nor is the fortune being joined to another planet, nor another planet to it which it receives, or which commits its own disposition to it,¹ the querent will acquire the substance, or the matter sought for will be perfected. But if that planet to which the lord of the Ascendant is being joined receives another planet and not the lord² of the Ascendant, or the Moon is being joined to that planet by a similar joining together and that planet does not receive the Moon,³ it is otherwise, because the joining together of a planet which receives

Therefore we have to assume that the lord of the Ascendant stands for the querent or someone.

¹ The joining of the Lord of the Ascendant or the Moon to the fortune must be the first application that said fortune is involved in. Otherwise some other planet will interfere.

² Reading *dominus* for *dominum*.

³ Reading *eam* for *eum*.

annuls the joining together of a planet which does not receive.¹

But if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined to a malefic which does not receive it, it signifies the destruction and the annulment of substance or of the matter sought for such that the querent does not acquire the substance, nor is the matter sought for perfected because the malefic planets, inasmuch as they do not receive, do not strive except for the destruction of matters, just as fortunes strive to perfect and to put in order whether they receive or not; thus malefics strive to the contrary unless they receive because then [when they receive] they restrain their malice and perfect matters just like fortunes.

**Whether the Querent Will Acquire Substance Which He Seeks,
Has Lent, or Deposited.
Chapter IV**

But if there is a question from someone who asks whether that person from whom he seeks substance may grant it to him, look at the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, which are the signicators of the querent; and the second house will be the house of his substance. But the seventh house and its lord will be the signicators of that person from whom it is sought; and the eighth house and its lord will be the signicators of the substance of that person from whom substance is sought. See then if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined to the lord of the eighth house (which house is the signicator of the substance of that person from whom substance is sought) or if any of these is joined to a planet which is in the eighth house, if [in addition] that planet is a fortune, the querent will acquire the substance about which the querent asks. If he seeks the property *of* that person, namely, the one from whom he seeks [property], that person will grant it to him; if he seeks substance which he has lent or deposited [with another], he will likewise acquire it whether [the signicator] receives that fortune or not.

But if it is a malefic and it receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, the querent will in a like manner acquire the substance about which he asks. But if the malefic does not receive, the querent will

¹ So reception increases the efficacy of an application over an application that does not involve a reception. I would assume that this requires that the applications be roughly equivalent in closeness and kind.

hardly ever recover the substance; and if he does obtain it, he will hardly ever obtain it all, and he will obtain that which he will get from thence with oppressions, hardship, and opposition.

Likewise if the lord of the eighth is in the first or it is in the second, and the lord of the second receives it, it signifies the obtaining of the matter about which the question was asked. But if the lord of the seventh or the lord of the eighth is in the first or second, and the lord of the Ascendant, the Moon, or the lord of the second does not receive it, it signifies that the querent will yet lose from the rest of his substance and the first loss will be increased.

If however the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined to a fortune which has dignity in the Ascendant, the matter will be accomplished; or if either of these is joined to a malefic which has dignity in the Ascendant and receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, the matter about which the querent asks will be accomplished.

And if the fortune to which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is being joined is in a strong place, the matter will be accomplished even without reception.

Moreover understand all of that which has been said above concerning affairs which are conducted, or exist, between persons of lesser rank, and also between common persons such as are the inhabitants of cities, castles, estates, and of similar places, which affairs are not between persons one of whom much exceeds the other [in rank] (understand persons who are exceeding [in rank to be] kings and great men who are fit to be kings such as are the greatest dukes, and the greatest margraves to whom kingships come), and also unless the business is between religious persons, or between lay-persons and religious persons in business which is not properly theirs. And I shall make mention to you [later] of those matters which are conducted [by these persons] in their own place and time if it is pleasing to Jesus Christ, our true lord and man.¹

¹ *Haec autem omnia supradicta intellige de rebus que tractantur vel sint inter minores et etiam inter communes personas sicut sunt habitatores civitatum castrorum villarum et similium que non sunt inter personas quarum una excedat aliam multum. Excedentes personas intellige reges et magnates qui sunt apti esse reges sicut maximi duces et maximi marchiones quibus conveniunt regna: vel nisi sint inter religiosos vel inter laycos et religiosos in rebus que non sint ipsorum proprie. Et ego faciam tibi mentionem de his que tractantur suo loco et tempore si placuerit domino nostro ihesu christo et vero homini.* Between the

Whether the Querent Will Gain from the Substance of the King. Chapter V

Likewise, other questions concerning substance sometimes come before the hands of astrologers, such as if someone asks whether he would gain from the substance of a king as the soldiers of kings and of other great men sometimes do [when] some one of the aforesaid asks whether he will get his wages from the king; and it is the same if he asks [for this] from the vicar of the king, or if there is anyone who asks concerning substance which he believes that he should obtain. Look then at the Ascendant and its lord, and at the Moon; these are the significators of the querent; and [look at] the second¹ from the Ascendant, which is the house of the querent's substance, and its lord. And look at the tenth² and its lord, which are the significators of the king or of his vicar or of a great man who receives the querent's service; and look at the eleventh³ and its lord, which are the significators of the substance of the king or great man.

If the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, has been joined to the

punctuation and ellipses this a fairly difficult passage. But several things, I believe, allow us to make sense out of it. The first sentence up to *altam multum* is quite clear. Then we begin a second sentence (according to the punctuation) which seems incomplete unless we understand it to be a parenthetical apposition to the first part defining who persons "who exceed in rank" may be. Then after the colon (which does not mean in Renaissance texts what it means now) we seem to be resuming the main sentence and defining other relationships which do not qualify according to the criteria set out in the first sentence, namely financial relationships between religious persons and between them and laypersons. Fortunately we have confirmation from Coley's *Clavis Eliminata*, the 1676 edition, p. 159, where he refers to this passage in Bonatti.

"Note that this Judgment is the more certain when the Business in question happens amongst persons of a mean degree, as one Tradesman with another, or one Citizen or Countrey man with another; Kings and Princes must be exempted, and all Persons of Quality, etc. as Guido well notes in his Judgment upon this subject."

¹ *secundum*. What is curious here is that the ending is neuter which means that it cannot stand for 'house' because 'house', *domus*, is a feminine noun. It would seem that *secundum* implies *signum*, or 'sign' rather than 'house'.

² *decimum*. Again a neuter ending suggesting 'sign' rather than 'house'.

³ Again neuter.

lord of the eleventh,¹ or one of them has been joined to a planet which is in the eleventh and which should be a fortune, not impeded, nor badly disposed, the querent will acquire that which he seeks from the substance of the king or great man whether he is a soldier or any other person who asks. [This is so] whether or not that fortunate planet receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon.

But if the planet is a malefic and it receives the significators, the querent will likewise obtain what he seeks. But if the malefic does not receive the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, the matter sought for will hardly ever be obtained.

Concerning the Time of the Aforesaid Matters.

Chapter VI

Furthermore, if the person who asks of you also wishes to know when that which he seeks will be accomplished, look then at the planet to which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, has been joined, which signifies the accomplishment of the matter, because if it makes an aspect with the lord of the Ascendant or with the Moon by a trine or sextile aspect, whether or not that planet which receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is a fortune, consider² whether it projects light or its rays over the rays of the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon. See how many degrees there are between them, to wit, from the degree in which one planet projects its rays over the rays of the other planet up to the completion of the aspect to the degree, and say that there will be that many days to the time of the accomplishment of the matter if both planets are in cadents. If they are in succedents there will be weeks; if they are in angles, there will be months. And if there is a matter which is seen to be much prolonged, you may say that there are years, especially also if both significators, namely, the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, and the planet to which it is being joined, are in angles. But if one planet is in an angle and the other is in a succedent, then it

¹ Suddenly we are back to a feminine ending, but this is not really inconsistent because even if a house is a sign, it still would be referred to by the word for 'house', which is feminine.

² *considera*. The text has a mark over the final 'a' which is a sign that the word should be read as *consideram*, but this is inconsistent with the form of the verbs found in the surrounding clauses all of which are imperatives.

signifies months. If one planet is in a succedent, the other in a cadent, it signifies weeks. But if one planet is in an angle and the other in a cadent, they signify months. And if the planet is the Sun, Venus, Mercury, or the Moon, the degrees which are between them likewise signify days. And also the Sun and Venus may perhaps signify weeks or more.

Likewise Messahalla said that if it is not then, it will be when said planet will be joined with the lord of the Ascendant, or with the Moon, bodily to the degree. But if in the hour of the question there is a planet which signifies the accomplishment of the matter in one sign along with the lord of the Ascendant, the matter will be accomplished when they are joined together bodily in the same degree and minute if the lord of the Ascendant is the more ponderous, whether or not it receives that planet which it being joined [to it]. But if the lord of the Ascendant is swifter so that it goes toward a conjunction of the planet signifying the accomplishment of the matter, and it receives the lord of the Ascendant, the matter will be accomplished at that time. But if it does not receive the lord of the Ascendant, the matter will not be perfected at that time unless that significator is in the angles when the conjunction is made, or is in the sign called¹ its joy. But if it is such that it will not be perfected at that time but will be perfected when that planet to which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined, or the planet which is being joined to the lord of the Ascendant, goes toward the Sun or the Sun goes toward it, and it is combust, and it goes out from combustion, then when it begins to appear from under the Sun's rays (whether it is before or after the Sun when it goes forth from combustion) such that it may be seen outside of the rays of the Sun, and if it is under the rays of the Sun at the hour of the question, the matter will be [accomplished] when that planet begins to appear from under the rays.

¹ Reading *dicto* for *dicatur*.

[The Fourth Part,] Concerning the Third House

Concerning Siblings¹ and Their State of Being. Chapter I

If anyone should ask you about his brother, see according to what manner he asks, namely, whether he asks about a brother who is present or about a brother who is absent, or about a healthy brother or a sick brother, or whatever status may be of the brother of the one who inquires. You will give the first house to the querent because the Ascendant signifies him. Then you will give the third house to the brother.

If the querent asks about an absent brother, look then at the lord of the third house, which signifies the brother, and see where the lord of the house of the brother may be found, because its status and disposition should be according to what the lord of that house signifies ([this refers to the lord of the house] in which the lord of the third house is [located]); and see how the planets aspect it, whether it is in the aspect of benefics or malefics, and by what aspect they aspect the lord of the third, and it [aspects] them, or [whether] they are joined bodily together.

Because if the significator of siblings is in its own house, namely, the third, and malefics do not aspect it by opposition or square aspect, you will then be able to say that the brother is in good health. But if malefics aspect it by the opposition or square aspect without reception, you will be able to say that his brother lives and is in good health but is in difficult circumstances, anxieties, and great concerns. But if they aspect by the aspects mentioned with reception, you will be able to say that his brother is in the aforementioned difficulties, but he will be well liberated from them and will escape. But if fortunes aspect by the trine or sextile aspect without reception or from the square or opposition aspect with reception, you will be able to say that his brother is well and is living well in the land in which he is. However, if the fortunes aspect it by the trine or sextile aspect with reception, say that his brother is in good health and is living well, and everything goes prosperously such that there is nothing lacking for him of that which he

¹ The word is actually *fratres* meaning 'brothers', but the masculine noun is often used to indicate both sexes, i.e., brothers and sisters. However, when it seems to clumsy to use the word 'sibling', I have used 'brother'.

desires.

But if the lord of the third is in the fourth house without the aspect of malefics, he is striving to this end, to acquire money in the land in which he is.

But if the lord of the third is in the fifth house and it is joined with the lord of the fifth with reception, whether or not the lord of the fifth is a fortune, provided that the lord of the fifth is not impeded in an evil manner, it signifies that his brother is well and rejoices and is happy with the people of the land in which he is. But if that planet with which the significator of the brother is joined is a fortune, and there is a conjunction by body, or by the trine or sextile aspect with reception, say that his brother is in good health, is cheerful, and rejoices, and is happy with the men and women of that place in which he is; and [that] he is used to eating, drinking, clothes, and he is zealous in the cult of Venus and in everything in which men are delighted if he is a person suitable to this end, or [one] who is delighted by such things, such as young people or those who are like young people. But if the lord of the third is in the fifth house, void in course, or in the bodily conjunction of malefics, or in their square or opposition aspect without reception, and those malefics which impede it are likewise also themselves impeded, it signifies the brother's bad condition, his poor state of being, and the distemper of his body, because the fifth house is the third from the house of siblings.

But if you find the lord of the third in other houses which have not been taken up such as the sixth, eighth and twelfth, with the aforesaid significators, say it to be the same, but it will be less.¹ If however you find the lord of the third house in the eighth house joined with fortunes by a trine or sextile aspect, say that his brother is not properly in good health, and he is not so infirm that it is necessary to fear for him, nevertheless, he is rendered distempered. However if it is joined with malefics, and it is in the sixth house or it is joined to the lord of the sixth, you will be able to say that his brother is made ill. And you can say that it is the same if the lord of the sixth house is in the third unless the lord of the third is well disposed as has been said above. Then look,

¹ *Si vero inveneris eum in aliis domibus que non sunt excepte sicut sunt sexta, octava, duodecima cum predictis significatoribus, dic illud idem sed erit minus.* It is not clear what is meant by 'not excepted', *non sunt excepte*, insofar as the words go, but the houses in question are ones that do not aspect the first and have traditionally been considered bad houses.

if you find that the brother of the querent is becoming ill, see also if the lord of the third is joined to the lord of the eighth house or it enters into combustion; it signifies that the brother will die from that illness.

But if you find the lord of the third in the seventh house, say that he is in that country to which he has set out, not yet going forth from there, and that he dwells in that land as a foreigner, and he is not well situated nor very badly, but is [a bit of] both.

If the lord of the third is in the eighth, one fears for the brother, and especially if the lord of the third is combust or joined with the lord of the eighth in the eighth or is joined with malefics which impede it in the eighth, because then it signifies the brother's death.

If the lord of the third is in the ninth, it signifies that he has set forth from the country in which he was at first to another country which is very distant; or perhaps he has given himself to some religion or otherwise carries on the life of a cleric or religious person.

But if it is the tenth house and it is joined with fortunes by the trine or sextile aspect, and especially with reception, it signifies that the brother will have acquired an office, honor or dignity in the country in which he is. But if it is joined to malefics by the square or opposition aspect, or [to malefics] which impede the lord of the third in another manner, or if the lord of the third is combust in the tenth, one must fear for his death.

But if the lord of the third is in the eleventh house joined with fortunes by a good aspect, or it is joined with the lord of the eleventh, it signifies that the brother is with some friend of his with whom he dwells happily, and he takes pleasure in and is delighted with his friend. But if there are malefics aspecting the lord of the third, it signifies that the brother does not take pleasure in those things which he has, nor does it seem to him that he is in a good state.

But if the lord of the third is in the twelfth house and it is joined with fortunes which receive it, and that fortune which receives it is not impeded, it signifies that the brother will have some skill in, or does the buying and selling of horses and cattle from which he profits, and he conducts his life in a praiseworthy manner. But if that fortune is impeded or it is joined by malefics which impede it, it signifies the evil condition of the brother, that he is ill or in a bad state such that if the lord of the third is joined with the lord of the eighth or is combust or it is going into combustion, [it signifies] that one must fear lest he die from this.

If the lord of the third is in the first house, the brother rejoices and

is given joy by those who love him, and he is well disposed.

If the lord of the third is in the second house, the brother does not take pleasure in any condition which he has. It is possible that he has been arrested or detained in another way so that he is not able to separate himself from the place in which he is when he desires. If however the lord of the third is retrograde, the brother strives to return home whenever he can.

And these sayings concerning brothers should suffice for you for the present because it would be lengthy to describe every circumstance of siblings.

For if a querent should ask about an ill brother, I will speak to you of this below in a treatise on illness. If he should ask about a brother who is in good health at present, I will describe those matters which will seem to be expedient to you in the treatise on nativities in a discourse which will be just as long as will be necessary.

In addition, it is necessary that I speak to you of certain other matters which likewise seem to be able to comprehended under this chapter, which are these: If someone should ask concerning a father, look at the fourth house for the father and speak to the querent just as I have spoken concerning the brother in the third house. And speak of the fifth house as I have spoken concerning the brother in the fourth house.¹ And speak of the sixth house for the father as I have spoken of the fifth for the brother. And of the seventh for the father speak as I have spoken to you of the sixth for the brother. And of the eighth for the father speak as I have spoken of the seventh for the brother. And of the ninth for the father speak as I have spoken of the eighth for the brother. And of the tenth for the father speak as I have spoken of the ninth for the brother. And of the eleventh for the father speak as I have spoken of the tenth for the brother. And of the twelfth for the father speak as I have spoken of the eleventh for the brother. And of the first for the father speak as I have spoken of the twelfth for the brother. And of the second for the father speak as I have spoken of the first for the brother. And of the third for the father speak as I have spoken of the second for the brother.

If the querent should ask concerning a paternal uncle, namely, concerning the brother of the father, you will give the fifth house to him and speak of the fifth for the paternal uncle just as I have spoken of the

¹ In other words, the fifth house is to the father as the fourth house is to the brother. This is simply the principle of derived house interpretation.

third house for the brother; and speak of the sixth for the paternal uncle just as I have spoken of the fourth house for the brother; and understand in this way concerning all of the houses. If the querent should ask of a servant or a minor dependent, you will give the sixth house to the servant, and speak of the sixth house just as I have spoken of the third house for the brother; and speak in this manner of the seventh house for the servant just as I have spoken of the fourth for the brother; and speak in this manner of the eighth for the servant just as I have spoken of the fifth for the brother; and so for all of the houses. However this is not to be neglected, that even though each house has its own sixth house and its own eighth house, and its own twelfth house, nevertheless, in each matter about which a question is asked the sixth house of the question and its lord signify the illness of whomever is asked about; the eighth house of the question and its lord signify the death of whomever is asked about; the twelfth and its lord signify his arrest. Nevertheless in this respect they are made different.¹

[The Fifth Part,] Concerning the Fourth House

**Concerning a House or an Inherited Property Which Someone
Intends to Buy or to Obtain in Some Other Manner, Whether
the Querent Will Obtain it.**

Chapter I

If someone is concerned about a house or a piece of land, or about a vineyard, or meadow, or olive grove, or forest, or about inherited property in general, which he may wish to buy or otherwise hopes to obtain, and the question is absolute because he does not speak of the land, or of the house, or of the inherited property of such and such a person, look at the Ascendant and its lord, and the Moon, which signify the querent; and look at the fourth sign and its lord, which are the significators of the matter sought for. If the lord of the Ascendant is in the fourth, or the Moon or the lord of the fourth is in the first, or one of these is joined to the other bodily, or by a trine or sextile aspect with reception, the querent will obtain the matter sought for easily and

¹ That is, they are made different by means of the houses from which they are counted.

without complication or impediment. But if it is without reception, or they are joined together by a square or opposition aspect with perfect reception, the querent will obtain the matter sought for. But if they are not joined together, neither by¹ aspect nor by body, but the Moon or other planet transfers light between them, the querent will obtain the matter sought for by means of someone who interposes himself and leads the matter towards accomplishment by his own shrewdness and his own industry.

But if that planet which is the swifter and which is being joined to the second becomes retrograde before their joining together is perfected to the degree, the matter will be destroyed after the querent will have considered that the matter is complete, and it will be annulled.

If however the matter has been completed by that person who involved himself in the completing of the matter, if it is the Moon which transfers light, see in which house she herself may be [located] because the matter will be completed by that person who is signified by the house in which the Moon is. If however it is another planet which transfers light between the lord of the Ascendant and the lord signifying the matter sought for, see of which house it is the lord because the matter will be perfected by that person; so that if it is the lord of the third house, the matter will be completed by the querent's brother. But if the querent does not have a brother, the matter will be perfected by some one of his kin younger than himself. And if there is none such, the matter will be completed by some one of his neighbors. If it is the lord of the fifth, the matter will be perfected by a child or by another person from the persons who are signified by the fifth house.

If it is the lord of the sixth, the matter will be perfected by a servant or minor dependent or by someone who is signified by the sixth house.

And if it is the lord of the seventh, the matter will be perfected by a wife, or lover, or a partner. But if the querent does not have a wife, the matter will be perfected by one of those who are signified by the seventh house.

And if it is the lord of the ninth,¹ [the matter will be perfected] by a religious person.

And if it is the lord of the tenth, the matter will be perfected by some great man or ruler.

¹ The eighth is covered with the second house.

And if it is the lord of the eleventh, the matter will be perfected by some friend of the querent.

And if it is the lord of the twelfth, the matter will be perfected by someone who pretends to be a friend of the querent, who is not.

And if it is the lord of the second or eighth, the matter will be perfected by such a person from whom one does not expect [it], and concerning whom no mention will have been made in that matter.¹

If however the lord of the fourth is not joined to the lord of the Ascendant, and the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, are not joined to the lord of the fourth, and there is no planet which transfers light between them, or there is some planet which prohibits the joining together of these planet, the matter will not be perfected.

If however you wish to know who it will be that does not allow the matter to be perfected, see that planet which prohibits the joining together between the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, [and the lord of the fourth], [and] of which house it is the lord, because the annulment of the matter will be brought about by that person who is signified by that house.

Concerning the Form of the Thing Which Is to Be Purchased and its Nature. Chapter II

If however a querent should ask, as often happens, "Look and see what the quality is of the thing that I wish to buy or obtain, whether it is fruitful or sterile land; or [if] a house, is its structure solid, wrecked, or faulty in another manner; or are its workers good and faithful or not," look at this likewise according to the Ascendant and its lord because then the Ascendant and its lord signify the workers of the earth, whether of a vineyard, or forest workers, or those who dwell in the household; and the sign of the fourth house signifies the land, house, or hereditary property, and of what kind it may be, and what is in it; and the seventh house signifies that which is on that land, namely, grain, barley, other grains, the usual domestic herbs which are accustomed to spring forth in gardens, as do cabbages, fennel, parsley, borage, spinach, and the like, if it is the season in which grains and domestic plants are in the

¹ *Et si fuerit dominus secunde vel octava perficietur per talem de quo non speratur et de quo non erit facta mentio in re illa.*

fields and gardens; it can also signify vines as for example a pergola¹ and the like.

If Jupiter is in the seventh house, well disposed, and in good state, it signifies that on that land there may be grain and plants from which are born the most useful seeds, and which are most edible,² for the advantage of mankind. If Venus, Mercury, the Moon or the Sun are in that place, well disposed and in good state, it signifies that there are plants on that land in which people delight, such as roses and others for the bearing of fragrant fruits and flowers of which garlands and the like are made. But if Jupiter, Venus, or the others which are in that place are impeded, there will be something of those things which I have described, but not much.

But if Saturn is [in that place], there will be rocks on that land, and ponderous, heavy things, and subterranean serpents which hinder the fruits of that land. But if Mars is in that place, and he is well-disposed and in good state without impediment, there will be wild roses on that land, and *lambrusca*,³ namely, wild vines making fruits in hedge rows, or perhaps it is possible that there are vines in that place producing such wine whereby men are made drunken. But if Mars is badly disposed, there will be bramble bushes, *salvineae*,⁴ and other kinds of spiny, poisonous [plants] which harm humans.

However, the tenth house from the Ascendant signifies the trees which are on the land. If Jupiter is in the tenth house, free from impediments, well disposed, it signifies that there will be an abundance of trees on that land, and that those trees are productive of good fruits and [are those] from which men seek utility and profit, as are pears, apples, olives, cherries, figs, and the like. If however Venus is in the tenth house, well disposed, it signifies fragrant and delectable fruits and those which are carried gladly in hand by youths and also by others, as are fragrant apples, oranges, and the like, especially in hot regions. But if the Sun is in the tenth house, free from impediments and otherwise

¹ A pergola is an arrangement of tree branches or vines to form an arbor under which one can walk.

² *comede*. This is an undocumented form of *comedo*, 'to eat'.

³ Words related to this one mean panelling and ceilings. But the following phrase makes it unlikely that this is the correct meaning here, but there is not any other documented meaning. Therefore we have not translated it.

⁴ We cannot find this word. It is obviously a name for some kind of bramble.

well-disposed, it signifies the good fruits of large trees, such as nuts, pine-nuts, and also apples, cherries, and the like. If however Mars is in the tenth house, free [from impediments] and well disposed, it signifies the fruits¹ which are gotten with difficulty from their trees, and which have spines on their skins, or other kinds of shell. And the Sun and Mars may also signify domestic vines or the fruits of other vines,² such as chestnuts, medlar fruits,³ *cornea*,⁴ and the like. If however Saturn is in the tenth house and well disposed, it signifies that there is not a great quantity of trees on that land, and there will be trees which bear fruits having astringent flavors, such as pears,⁵ and especially wild ones, and also sometimes service berries, acorns, nuts, and the like. If however Mercury or the Moon is in the tenth house and in such a state as has been described about the others, it signifies fruits of many kinds and of diverse flavors and colors, and [Mercury and the Moon] signify according to that which those planets to which they are connected signify. However if Jupiter is badly disposed, then there will also be few trees of use on that land, and which also bear little, and they easily⁶ lose their fruits. Likewise also with Venus if she is badly disposed; nevertheless it will be possible that those trees will be of the kinds described above.⁷ If however Saturn is badly disposed, there will be few wild trees, and the fruits of these will hardly ever be edible for humans. One must also understand in a similar manner concerning Mars and the Sun in regard to the fruits of those trees which they signify. Mercury and the Moon will signify likewise that which the planets to which they will apply signify. If however any of these planets is retrograde, that person who buys the land will sell the fruits of those trees, and he will

¹ Reading *fructus* for *frucus*.

² *alium fructus*. The insertion of 'vines' as the word that 'other' modifies does not make complete sense because chestnuts do not come from vines. But there is no other feminine noun in the sentence that *alium* could be referring to.

³ According to the *O.E.D.* the medlar tree bears a small, apple-like fruit that is eaten only when decayed. Yum!

⁴ Possibly this has something to do with dogwoods, also known as cornel trees, but we know of no fruit or nut from these trees, and the word appears undocumented.

⁵ These pears must have tasted more like quince, which is closely related.

⁶ *leviter*. Or quickly.

⁷ Presumably the kinds of trees signified by a well-disposed Venus.

keep little of these for himself, and he will not strive to keep a part of these unless Venus is the significatrix, because then he will reserve for himself a part of those fruits, especially of the more delectable fruits.

Concerning the Quality of the Laborers. Chapter IV

If however you wish to know about the state of the laborers¹ of the land, or vineyard, or about the keepers of a meadow, or of a forest, or concerning the inhabitants [of the land] of what kind they are, look at the Ascendant, and see whether Jupiter is there in a good state; [if so,] the laborers will be good and faithful, and they will be men of moderate age. And if Jupiter is oriental, they will be youths of good spirit. And if Jupiter is occidental, the laborers will be already beginning to grow old, or perhaps they will be old; nevertheless they will all be of good spirit. And if Jupiter is direct, the laborers will remain in their toil and that work will be profitable to the querent. And if Jupiter is retrograde, the laborers will quit their toil, and the querent will place that work with other workers who are worse than these.

And if Venus is in the place of Jupiter, the laborers will be good and faithful, and in almost all matters the laborers will be just as those laborers who are signified by Jupiter, except that Venus signifies laborers who are younger and more delightful in the aforesaid quality.

And if Saturn is in the place of Jupiter, the laborers or inhabitants [of the land] will be liars and thieves, even if they are old and decrepit.

And if Mars is in Jupiter's place, the laborers will be thieves and liars, and they will steal more manifestly than those who are signified by Saturn, and they will be *scarani*,² and will be doers of evil greater than mere robbery. And if Mars and Saturn are direct, the laborers will remain at their toil; if they are not [direct], the workers will withdraw from the toil, and the work will be placed with better laborers or at length with better tenants.³

¹ We would not usually think of laborers in connection with the fourth house, however, this section clearly refers to serfs.

² This is an undocumented word, but apparently related words have to do with soldiers of various kinds. Given the context the word may mean 'brigands.'

³ As with tenant farmers.

Concerning the Oldness or Newness of Things.

Chapter IV

If however you wish to know about those trees, or about the building, whether they are old or newly planted, or whether the building has been newly built, see if some planet is in the tenth house; [if so] the building will not be very old, nor newly built; [it is] likewise concerning trees that they will not be very old nor very young saplings. But if there is no planet in that place, see where the lord of the tenth house is, whether it aspects the tenth house from the place in which it is; or if it does not aspect the tenth house, but it aspects a planet which aspects the tenth house from its own place, [then] the trees will be young, and the building newly built so that it is not old, and especially if the lord of the tenth house is oriental. But if it is occidental, then the trees will be old and the building old. But if it does not aspect the tenth house, nor is it joined to any planet which aspects the tenth house, nor one which returns its light to the tenth house, and it is occidental, those trees will be old and the building old.

Thereupon if you wish to know what will come to pass concerning those trees or that building, look in relation to the lord of the tenth house; if it is direct, whether it is a fortune or an infortune, the trees and the building will remain in their [current] state. But if it is retrograde, the trees will be rooted out from that land, and similarly the building. But if the lord of the tenth house does not aspect, and it is not in the eleventh house, or in the third, or in the fifth, or in the ninth from the Ascendant, the land will be without trees, and without a building, and it will not be cultivated, or if it is cultivated, badly cultivated. To the end that you may know whether there are seeds on this land, to wit, wheat or other grains, if the time is suitable for this, look then at the lord of the seventh house; if it aspects the seventh house, there will be seed on that land which the lord of the land hopes to gather again for his profit. But if the lord of the seventh does not aspect the seventh, there will not be useful seed on that land.

Concerning the Situation of the Land.

Chapter V

If you wish to know how the land is situated, look at the fourth house and of which triplicity that sign may be. If it is of the triplicity of Aries,

that land will be mountainous and there will be stones upon it; and it will be badly disposed for cultivating; and the land will be lean, and it will lacking in cultivation and manure, and in [the kind of] endeavor such that fruit may be had from it.

If however the fourth sign is of the triplicity of Taurus, the land will be level and suitable for the undertaking of cultivation, and it will be fruitful.

And if the fourth sign is of the triplicity of Gemini, part of the land will be level and part will mountainous, and it will not be very fruitful, nor very sterile. Likewise if the fourth house is a bicorniporeal sign, it may be of any triplicity whatever because this signifies a mountainous condition and a level condition, neither really the former nor really the latter.

If the fourth house is of the triplicity of Cancer, the land will be swampy, or will be strewn with water,¹ or watery in some other manner, or placed next to a watery place. And if you wish, attend to the fourth sign and its associate² because if they are fiery, it signifies arid, rocky, and mountainous places.

And a certain person said that the fourth house and its lord always signify the buying of immoveable property, such as a house, land, and the like. And he said that the fifth and its lord signify profit from it. And he said that if there is moveable property and there is that which is exchanged and passes over quickly from the hand of one to the hand of another, that the seventh house and its lord signify that, and the eighth house and its lord signify profit from it.

Whether the Hiring of Land or a House Would Be Profitable. **Chapter VI**

And if someone who wishes to rent land or a house asks [a question], or there is a laborer who would take the land according to the manner of a laborer, or for a certain rental fee³ for each year, as happens often, or there is a house [suitable] for living in and someone wishes to know

¹ *aquesternium*. This form is undocumented but may be composed of *aqua*, 'water', and *sterno*, 'to stretch', or 'overlay'.

² *et eius socium*. It is not clear exactly what this refers to.

³ *datum*. This seems to be an undocumented form of *dotium*, 'toll' or 'rental fee', which in turn is a late form of *datio*, a 'gift' or 'donation'.

if it is good to rent it, you will give the first house and its lord to the person who rents the property, and the seventh house and its lord to that person who puts it up for rent. And you will give the tenth house to the profit which he can seek from that item, and you will give the fourth house to the purpose which he may pursue from thence.

If the lord of the Ascendant is in the Ascendant or aspects from the trine or sextile aspect, or there is a fortune in that place, whether it has dignity in that place or not, or the Part of Fortune is not impeded, it signifies that the renter will rent that item hoping for good from thence, and he will not repent that he has rented, and he will be pleased, and he will be glad in the renting of the property.

But if there is a malefic in the Ascendant and either of those [indications previously mentioned], either the querent will regret that he has rented the item in question, or he will not rent it, or he wishes to rent for this purpose, in order to deceive the one who has put the property up for rent. Then look at the seventh house for that person who puts the property [up for rent]; if the lord of the seventh is in it or aspects by trine or sextile aspect, or there is a fortune in that place not impeded in an evil manner, the one who puts up the property for rent will complete that which is agreeable to the renter, and he will keep the promise to the renter, and it will be advantageous to the renter.

But if there is a malefic in that place which is not the lord of the seventh house, the one who puts up the property for rent will not keep for the renter what he has promised to him, and will strive to deceive the renter, and act in a fraudulent manner against the renter.

Then look at the tenth house; if there is a fortune in that house or one aspects by trine or sextile aspect, the matter will be settled and completed. But if there is a malefic in that house which is not the lord of the tenth, or it aspects that house by opposition or square aspect, that renting will not be completed, and it may be that a difference will arise because of trees or because of buildings standing on that land.

Then look at the fourth house, and you will give it to the outcome of the matter; if there is a fortune in that place, or the lord of the fourth is in it, or aspects it by the trine or sextile aspect, the outcome of that matter will be good, useful, praiseworthy. But if there is a malefic in that house which is not the lord of the fourth house, the outcome will be bad and the renter will give way to loss and trouble.

[The Sixth Part,] Concerning the Fifth House

Whether Someone Will Have Children by His Wife or by Another Woman Whom He Describes, or Whether Similarly He Asks about Children in a Similar Manner.

Chapter I

If you should be asked by some man whether he will have children from a wife¹ whom he has, or from another women, or a women should ask whether she will have children by that man whom she has or by some other, take the shadow² immediately, and arrange the figure according to the Ascendant and the other houses; and look at the Ascendant and its lord, and the Moon; and if you see the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, or one of them, joined to the lord of the fifth, which is the house of children, say that he will have children; likewise if the lord of the fifth house is joined to the lord of the Ascendant.

And if you do not find them joined together, see whether some planet transfers light between the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the fifth house because this signifies children, although after delay. But if this is not so, see whether the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, should be in the fifth house; [if so,] say that the querent will have children. Likewise if the lord of the fifth house is in the Ascendant, say that the querent will have children; but if this is not [so], see whether the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, and the lord of the fifth house, are both joined to some planet which is more ponderous than they because that planet will collect the light of both and will be the receiver of disposition, and it will be the signifier of whether the children should live or not if there are children. And see whether it is free from the impediments which I have described to you in the treatise on the impediments of the planets, namely, whether a planet is retrograde, combust, cadent, etc. [If they are free of such,] say that those children will live. But if that more ponderous planet which is the receiver of the disposition is impeded, namely, retrograde, combust, or cadent, whether

¹ *mulier*. This word is somewhat ambiguous because it can mean both 'wife' and 'woman' in general. I have translated it throughout this section as the context dictates.

² I.e., observe the time.

from the angles or the Ascendant,¹ or besieged by malefics, or has some one of the aforesaid impediments, those children will not live long, nor will their father and mother be blessed on their account. Then look at Jupiter, which naturally signifies children; if you find him in the Ascendant, or in the 3rd, or in the 9th, or in the 11th, free from all of the impediments described above, say that the woman has conceived or will conceive shortly, perhaps in the first lying together, or a little after, so that it will be just as something which seems already done, or is in [the state of] being done.

And if Venus is in the fifth house not impeded, and there is another fortune aside from Jupiter or Venus not impeded, it signifies that the woman will be made pregnant in a short time. But if Jupiter is impeded in the aforesaid places, say that a child has not been conceived; or if it has, it will not be brought to term, but will be destroyed, or the mother will abort. Likewise if Venus is joined to Saturn or Mars or she is under the rays of the Sun going toward the bodily conjunction of the Sun, the woman will not be pregnant unless a fortune is in the fifth house, because then she can be pregnant more properly, or she will be shortly, but the birth will hardly ever be good. But if Saturn or Mars or another malefic is in the fifth house, especially the Tail of the Dragon (which signifies emptying), or [one of these] aspects the fifth house from opposition and also from the square aspect, it signifies that the woman will not be pregnant; malefics seem to frustrate conception if they aspect the fifth house from the square aspect.

When There Is an Absolute Question about a Child.

Chapter II

But if an interrogation is absolute because the querent speaks thus, "Will a man or a woman have children?" and he does not he speak of whether [it will be] of this woman or this man, look then at the Ascendant and its lord, and see if the lord of the Ascendant is in the Ascendant, or there is a fortune in that place well disposed, or [if the lord] is in the tenth house or the eleventh house or in the fifth house, and [if] Jupiter is as I have said in the third, fifth, ninth, or eleventh house, the querent will have children, but there will be some delay in

¹ . . . *cadens sive ab angulis sive ab ascendente*. We have no idea why he makes this distinction. Perhaps it is merely emphasis.

this, though not very great. If however the lord of the Ascendant is not in the fifth house (which is the house of children) but is in the fourth house or in the seventh, and it is not impeded by combustion or retrogradation, nor by being besieged by two malefics, nor is joined bodily to one of the malefics which impedes it (namely, to Saturn or Mars), nor is with the Dragon's Tail, and Jupiter is in one of the places spoken of above (the third, fifth, ninth, or eleventh house), that man or woman will have children, but there will be a greater delay in this than that spoken of above. But if one of the malefics, namely, Saturn, Mars, or the Dragon's Tail, is in the Ascendant, or aspects it by the square aspect or by the opposition, and the lord of the Ascendant is impeded by retrogradation, combustion, or cadency,¹ or is in the second, sixth, eighth, or twelfth, and Jupiter is in a bad place, and especially in the eighth, or it is impeded in an evil manner by retrogradation, or combustion, or cadency,² it signifies that the querent will have either few children, or none at all, and concerning them he will not rejoice that he is blessed thence; and he will see their death.

And see then where the Moon is; if she is impeded, or the lord of the fifth is impeded, and one of them in the sixth house, the querent will be saddened by their illness; but if it is in the eighth, because of their death; if it is in the twelfth, because of their imprisonment. And see what sign is on any of the aforesaid houses since the reason whereby he will be saddened because of his children will be from the part of the body assigned to that sign. If it is Aries, it will be because of the head; if it is Taurus, it will be because of the neck; if it is Gemini, it will be because of the arms or hands; if Cancer, because of the breast; if Leo, because of the stomach or the back; if Virgo, because of the intestines and the parts [of the body] adjacent to the umbilicus; if Libra, because of the hips; if Scorpio, because of the private parts;³

¹ *casu*. Usually this word means detriment or fall by sign, but it is also closely related to the word 'cadent', and these lists of impediments elsewhere have cadency as one of the impediments. Therefore we have translated it as 'cadency'. But we cannot rule out the possibility that Bonatti means 'detriment' or 'fall'. His use of terminology is not completely consistent.

² *casu*. As above.

³ *verendorum*. 'That which is to be feared or revered'. Oh, the history of euphemisms!

if Sagittarius, because of the hip-bones;¹ if Capricorn, because of the knees; if Aquarius, because of the shins; if Pisces, because of the feet.

And always you should be careful because if you will find Jupiter, Venus, the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, or the Dragon's Head in the fifth house, not impeded by evil impediments, you should not despair for the querent regarding children because all of these signify that the querent will have children. And if there is not any fortune in the fifth house, and you find in that house any one of the malefics which has testimony in that house, and the question is not entirely evil,² it signifies that the querent will have children but they will not inherit the paternal or maternal property, because the [mother and father] are bound to see their children's death. Furthermore also look out for Jupiter, whether he is in an angle, because he signifies children, although not many. If he is oriental in an angle, it signifies quickness in having children.³ If Jupiter is occidental in an angle, it signifies slowness in having children, and that there will be some delay in this.

Whether a Woman is Pregnant. Chapter III

Likewise if someone should be concerned as to whether a woman has conceived and carries a pregnancy in [her] womb or not, look to the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, or to some one of those planets which signifies the woman; and look at the fifth house and its lord, which are the signifiers of the pregnancy; if you find the Moon in the fifth, or you find the lord of the fifth in the Ascendant, free from the malefics and the other impediments which have been described above, it signifies that the woman has conceived and holds a pregnancy within her womb; likewise if the lord of the Ascendant commits its disposition to a planet in an angle, and in this matter more securely and

¹ The text has *ancarum* for Libra, which is supposed to be related to our word 'haunch', and is given as 'hips' in the lexicon, and *coxarum* for Sagittarius, which also means 'hip bones'. Usually Libra rules the upper part of the hips, and Sagittarius the thighs.

² *nec question fuerit ex toto mala* . . . We have to assume here that the "question" refers to the chart of the question and not the question itself.

³ That is, that children will be born within a short time, not that the childbirth itself will be quick.

certainly if that planet to which the lord of the Ascendant has committed disposition is received or itself receives the lord of the Ascendant, because then this signifies conception.

But if that planet to which the lord of the Ascendant is joined and to which it has committed disposition is in a cadent house, it signifies that the woman has conceived a bodily disease, and that which seems to be a pregnancy will be an illness rather than a pregnancy; and if it is a pregnancy, it will not come to a good end, and especially if the Ascendant is Aries, Cancer, Libra, or Capricorn, or there is one of the malefics in one of the angles, and this more strongly if the Dragon's Tail is in that place because it signifies abortion above all of the other malefics.

But if the more ponderous planet to which the lord of the Ascendant has committed disposition is in a good place from the Ascendant, and it is not in conjunction with malefics, but is free from impediments, and the Moon is similarly safe, it signifies that the pregnancy will come to a good end, and the birth will not be nullified. Similarly if the lord of the fifth, which is the significator of children, is in the Ascendant, free from impediments mentioned above (to wit, that it is not retrograde, combust, nor joined with malefics, and especially bodily to the the Dragon's Tail, or to the other malefics from the opposition or square aspect), it signifies pregnancy. But if it is impeded by some one of the impediments mentioned above, there will not be a pregnancy; and if there is, it will be nullified and will be destroyed.

Whether a Woman is Pregnant or Not.

Chapter IV

Sometimes women are wont to doubt whether they are pregnant or not, and also their men who desire to have children are unaware where there is a pregnancy or not; and they [are all] wont to ask concerning this matter so that they made certain about this by the astrologer. Wherefore if a question is posed to you by a woman on her own behalf whether she has conceived or not, and the question is not about another person, look at the Ascendant and its lord and see where the lord of the Ascendant is; if it is in an angle, free from the malefics and from other impediments, it signifies that the woman is pregnant. Similarly if the lord of the Ascendant [is] in a succedent house or even in a cadent house, provided that it is received by a planet standing in an angle. But

if it is in a cadent from an angle and is not joined to a planet which receives it, or if that planet does receive and it is retrograde or combust or is cadent, it signifies that the woman is not pregnant; likewise if the Moon is impeded. But if the Moon is received by a planet which is free from the impediments mentioned above, she will be pregnant. But if the Moon is not received and the lord of the Ascendant is impeded, she will not be pregnant. And if the lord of the Ascendant is in a good place and aspects the Ascendant by an excellent aspect, she will be pregnant.

If indeed a man asks for a woman who herself wishes [to know], the judgment will be the same. If however the man asks from his own movement¹ and for himself but yet with the woman not knowing [that he asks], you will consider the seventh house and its lord according to the previously presented conditions, and you will judge by the lord of the seventh in the same way as you have judged by the lord of the Ascendant, but never neglecting the Moon.²

If a Woman Who Has Conceived Carries One or Several in Her Womb. Chapter V

And if you are anxious concerning a woman who is pregnant, or if someone is concerned as to whether she carries one or several [foetuses], for this look according to the Ascendant and see if the Ascendant is Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, or Pisces,³ or if the Ascendant is some one of the other signs and there is in that sign or in the fifth house two good planets; [if one of these is so], she has conceived twins.⁴ If

¹ That is, whatever it is that moves him to pose the question.

² That is, the Moon must be employed in the same way as in the case of judgment by the Ascendant and its lord.

³ These are the double-bodied or bicorporeal signs which signify things coming in twos. The reader may wonder about the presence of Virgo among these signs since there is nothing of "twoness" about the Virgin. As we have stated elsewhere, double-bodied or bicorporeal comes from the fact that signs bear the quality of the season passing away and the one that is coming. That three of these signs also have images that have a quality of doubleness may not be precisely coincidence but that fact is also not essential to the nature of the bicorporeal signs.

⁴ *binos*.

however the Dragon's Head is in that place with these, say that she carries more than two, and it is possible that she carries four.¹ And if there are no planets in the Ascendant and also not in the fifth, see if any of the planets aspects the Ascendant or the fifth house by degree such that the aspect is not more than one degree before the line of the Ascendant or [the line of the] fifth house,² or more than two degrees behind, because however many planets aspect, there will so many [foetuses] conceived in the womb even if all seven planets should aspect those degrees. Also see how many there are and how many aspect from the trine or sextile aspect, [for] so many of the conceived will come to completion; but as many as aspect from the square or opposition aspect, so many of the conceived will suffer destruction.

And if you find the Sun or Moon in one sign, however in such a way that the Moon is still going toward the Sun and is not distant from the Sun by more than five degrees backward nor forward by more than two degrees, you will judge this [to be] the same [as] if the Sun or Moon is in Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius and Pisces.³ But if the Ascendant or likewise the fifth house is some one of the fixed or moveable signs, and the Sun and Moon are in fixed or moveable signs, and there are not several planets in the Ascendant or in the fifth house, nor are there the aspects of these as I have described, you should know that the woman carries but one [child] and not several.

Whether a Woman Carries a Male or a Female [Child].

Chapter VI

And if one asks whether a woman carries a male or a female

¹ As we have already seen, the S. Node or Dragon's Tail is lethal to pregnancy. Now we learn that the N. Node or Dragon's Head is very beneficial.

² I.e., cusp.

³ *Et si inveneris solem et lunam in uno signo ita tamen quod luna vadat ad solem nec sit longe ab eo plus quinque gradibus retro nec ante plus duobus illud idem iudicabis so sol vel lune in geminis virgine sagittario et pisce.* The problem here is how can the Moon be going toward the Sun if she is two degrees forwards of the Sun (*ante plus duobus*). We have to assume that the intention is not that a strict application is required but merely that the Moon be close to the Sun within five degrees prior to two degrees after. Also Pisces is referred to in the text in the singular (*pisce*). This is probably an error.

[child], look then at the Ascendant and its lord, at the fifth house and its lord, and see if they are in Aries, Gemini, Leo, Libra, Sagittarius, or Aquarius;¹ [if they are,] it is a sign that she carries a male child. But if this is not seen, [it is a sign] that she carries a female child. But if the lord of the Ascendant is in a masculine sign and the lord of the fifth is in a feminine sign, or the lord of the fifth is in a masculine sign and the lord of the Ascendant is in a feminine sign, then go back to the Moon, which is a sharer in every matter, and see if she is in a masculine sign and if she is joined to a planet which is in a masculine sign; then she will give testimony to that planet which is in the masculine sign. Or if she is in a feminine sign, she will give testimony to that planet which is in a feminine sign whether the lord of the Ascendant is in masculine sign and the lord of the fifth [is in feminine sign], or contrariwise.² Likewise if the Moon is being joined to a feminine planet, she will give testimony to that planet which is in a feminine sign. Likewise if the lord of the Ascendant or the lord of the fifth house is a masculine or feminine planet, the Moon will give testimony to that planet to which her position is similar.³ And you should know that Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and the Sun are always masculine except sometimes in cases of which this is not one.⁴ And Venus is always feminine except sometimes in cases of which this is not one. But Mercury is called masculine when it is oriental in the world⁵ because it rises in the morning before the Sun; it is called feminine when it is occidental in the world because it sets in the evening after the Sun.⁶ Likewise Mercury is masculine when it is joined to masculine planets, and when it is joined to feminine

¹ The masculine signs.

² Therefore in an ambiguous situation the testimony of the Moon by application is the decisive factor.

³ As best as one can tell, this means that the Moon in a masculine sign will give testimony to whichever of the two lords is masculine, and if the Moon is in a feminine sign, the Moon will give testimony to the one that is feminine.

⁴ In other words those instances of apparent reversal of sex do not pertain to this judgment.

⁵ *in mundo*. This is a curious use of the phrase because one would assume that it means oriental in the houses. But as the next text makes clear, Bonatti refers to Mercury rising before the Sun which is not an *in mundo* placement in the usual sense of the word.

⁶ This is usually a criterion for determining the sect of Mercury, not its sex. This is another example of how Medieval astrology tended to mix together sex and sect.

[The Seventh Part,] Concerning the Sixth House

Whether a Sick Person May Be Delivered from an Illness by Which He Is Held Fast or Not.

Chapter I

If a question has been put to you concerning a sick person, whether or not he will be delivered from an illness which holds him fast, see first of all who is that person who asks, whether it is that same sick person himself, or another person who asks for the sick person, and whether it is of concern to him to ask or not, and whether he asks according to the desire of the sick person or because of his own movement. Because if he asks according to the desire of the sick person and according to his permission, the first house is given to him and the sick person. If however he asks according to his own movement, the first house is given to him, but that house is given to the sick individual by which his person is signified; so that if one asks for his brother, the first house is given to the querent, the third house to the sick person; if for the father, the first house is given to the querent, the fourth is given to the sick person. And understand in this manner concerning the significations of all of the houses according to what has been said in the treatise on the twelve houses.¹

You will also consider of what social condition the sick person may be, namely, whether he is a lay-person or a cleric or in another way religious, and whether he is of those who are placed before the physician or before whom the physician is placed;² for there have been

¹ Tractatus II, Part 3 of Bonatti Part II in our edition.

² Various forms of *praepono* are being used here. It is not clear here what significance this may have. But later on it becomes clear that what Bonatti is doing is classifying charts of infirmity questions according to whether the physician is given the first house of the question (the physician being placed over the sick person) or the sick person is given the first house (the sick person being placed over the physician). This has to do with the infirm person's being or not being aware of the question being asked, whether the question is asked according to the infirm person's intention, whether it is being asked according to the intention of the querent or physician. Accordingly the infirm person will

many and diverse opinions about this. Also you should look at the form¹ of the illness and its state; for one must examine a new illness one way and an old illness another way. And I will speak to you in this section of the judging of the conditions of the sick person and of the infirmities, and over which sick persons one must place the physician and for which not, and in which cases, and which sick persons must be placed over the physician and which not, and in which cases, and how, and when, according to different opinions if Jesus Christ Our Lord should grant to me his grace.² For some gave the Ascendant to the physician, the tenth to the sick person, the seventh to the illness, but the fourth to the remedy; and Zabel and his successors were of this opinion. Also the physician was placed over the sick person according to this [arrangement], [when] the *seventh* [was given] to the illness, but the *tenth* to the remedy; and those persons likewise placed the physician over the sick person even if the question were made concerning the sick person. Also the physician is placed over the sick person when he and the physician are unaware [of the question being asked, for] then the physician is placed over the sick person because the question is given for him; or should another person of his own will ask for him whose condition is infirm, or ask of the physician with the sick person being unaware, then the first is given to the sick person, the tenth to the physician, the seventh to the illness, and the fourth to the remedy; and in this instance the sick person is placed over the physician.⁴

be assigned a house, the physician another house, the infirmity a house, and the remedy yet another house.

¹ *speciem*.

² The issue appears to be sufficiently confused so as to well warrant the invocation of divine aid in making sense out of it.

³ See next note.

⁴ *Quidam enim dabant ascendens medico decimam infirmo: septimam infirmati: quartam vero medicine: et in hac opinione fuerunt zael et eius sequaces. Et sic secundum hoc medicus preponebatur infirmo: septima infirmitati: decima vero medicine: et illi similiter praeponabant medicum infirmo ut si fiat questio de infirmo: medicus etiam preponitur infirmo eo et medico ignorantibus tunc medicus preponitur ei quoniam datur vel alius pro eo de ipsius voluntate cuiusque conditionis sit infirmus vel querat a medico ignorante infirmo tunc prima datur infirmo, decima medico: septima infirmitati: quarta medicine et in isto casu preponitur infirmus medico.*

If we change the *ut si* to *et si*, we get an improved result in some rather murky Latin.

But if someone asks according to his own movement concerning an infirm king without the king's knowledge, the first house is given to the physician, the tenth to the infirm person, the seventh to the infirmity, and the fourth to the remedy. But if someone should ask concerning a pope in the same manner or about any other cleric whatsoever, the first house is assigned to the physician, ninth to the sick person, the seventh to the infirmity, but the third to the remedy.

Now however I shall speak to you of the conditions of illnesses; for if you know the conditions of the illnesses, you will be able to judge concerning these better and more certainly. And although medicine may be said to have been invented for rich men and great men,¹ nevertheless now the common people among the rustics have taken possession of medicament, and this is not a wonder because these also, just as great men, are made infirm and desire to be delivered [from illness].

Speaking of an illness as long-lived or old, I consider an illness long-lived and of long-standing inasmuch as it is a year old, because illnesses of a year in duration are never cured easily, nay rather with the greatest difficulty. But I do not consider that illness old which is not yet a year old. Wherefore if an illness is old because it is more than a year old, of whatever rank the sick person may be, you should give the twelfth house to the illness; if the illness is recent (one which is not a year old), you should give to it the seventh house if you give the first to the physician, because the physician is the enemy of the illness. And if you give the tenth to the sick person, you should give the fourth house to the remedy, because although the remedy may cure the sick person, yet [the house of the remedy] is in opposition to the sick person and the opposition signifies the state of being an enemy; for this reason the remedy is called the enemy of the infirmity because in remedies those remedies are found which are of a contrary nature and which do not nourish the illness;² nay rather they sometimes banish [it]. If you give the ninth house to the sick person, the third house is given to the remedy; if you give the third house to the sick person, as it sometimes is, the ninth house is given to the remedy.

And it is necessary for you to consider whether an illness is general or particular, because if [it is] general, you should judge in general of

¹ The more things change, the more they remain the same.

² For those who think that allopathic medicine is some recent innovation of "scientific medicine," here is proof of its antiquity. The remedy opposes the current state of the sick person's illness and is therefore its open enemy.

the whole body; but if it is particular, you should judge according to that part of the body in which the illness flourishes.

But if you would inquire how the houses are made different signifying sick persons¹, physicians, infirmities, and remedies when these houses ought to be equivalent, nay rather almost the same, I believe that the reason could well be proved for you, but it would be long to explain, nor could everything be everywhere discussed; for this reason it is necessary for us to keep the sayings of the philosophers, and to know that they themselves did not say this without cause; for it is necessary to trust [their] teaching. From now on I shall arrange for you the manner of judging with regard to one who is sick, whether he will be delivered or not; nevertheless, I wish that you should know first concerning this matter what Zabel said and what his successors have said as to how this is to be known, since in this matter he said that the Ascendant signifies the physician for this reason, because the illness is signified by the seventh house and the physician is the enemy of the illness; wherefore because the first house is the enemy of the seventh house, which signifies the infirmity, the first house is correctly given to the physician because he is the enemy of the infirmity. Also, in this matter the physician is signified by the first house, because insofar as the first house is rendered fortunate, so the care of the physician helps the sick person; and insofar as the first house is rendered unfortunate, so the care of that physician will harm the sick person. And because of this Zabel said this, that the first house is given to the physician; this statement which he himself said, that the tenth house is given to the sick person, he did not do for any other reason except that by the tenth house is signified whether the sick person is obedient to the physician; because if the sick person obeys well, there will be help for him; and this will be known by the planet which is found in the tenth house, because if it is a good planet, the sick person will be obedient to the physician, and for that reason he will be better able to be cured.

The seventh house he gave to the infirmity because by means of the seventh house it will be known whether the illness is short or long; for if there is a fortune in that house, the sick person will be delivered quickly, and especially if the fortune has dignity in the house. And if there is a malefic in that house which is not well disposed, the illness will grow strong in the sick person.

¹ Reading *significantes infirmos* for *significantes domos*.

The fourth house is given to the remedy, because through the fourth house it is known whether the remedy will prevail in the unwell person or not, inasmuch as the fourth house is well or ill disposed. For if there is a fortune in that house, the remedy will be strong in the sick person; but if there is a malefic in that house which does not have dignity there (to wit, domicile, exaltation, or two of the other minor dignities¹), the remedy will be rather to the harm of the sick person than to his advantage.

But there is another way² also by a direct line that one may know whether the sick person would be delivered or not. The first house and its lord, and the Moon are given to the sick person; and the sixth house is given to the infirmity if it is a recent infirmity which has not passed beyond a year. But if there is an old illness which is more than one year, the twelfth house is given to it, as I have said. You should see whether the significator is [one] of the planets which has friendship³ with the significator of the physician, remedy, or the infirmity, through whichever houses the physician, or sick person, or remedy, or infirmity are signified, because if the significator of the physician is one of those planets which are friendly⁴ to the significator of the sick person, the physician will be advantageous to the sick person. If the significator of the remedy is one of those likewise which are friendly to the significator of the sick person, that physician's remedy will be advantageous to the sick person. Likewise if the significator of the infirmity is one of those planets, the infirmity will do less harm. But if the significator of the physician is one of those which are hostile to the sick person, the physician will not help, nor will his remedy; rather it will do harm and will be contrary to the sick person. And that planet which is one of the friendly planets will advance, and that planet which is from among the enemies will do harm. And if all of the planets are from among the friends, all will be profitable [to the sick person]; and if all of the planets are from among the enemies, all of them will do harm. And if the significator of the physician, or the Moon, is joined with the lord of the seventh house, the illness will be its enemy. And if [the significator,

¹ That is, either by triplicity and bound, triplicity and face, or bound and face.

² What follows is the more standard way of dealing with the question.

³ See the Third Treatise (Part III of our edition of Bonatti), Part 2, chapters 22 and 23 for the friendships and hostilities of the planets.

⁴ *diligunt*.

or the Moon,) is joined with the lord of the sixth house, the illness will be prolonged more than it would seem that it ought to be; however, in this case the sick person will escape and be delivered at last. You will also consider whether the significator of the illness is in one of the azimuth degrees, and is in the twelfth house, in the eighth house, and one of the malefics aspects it, because then it signifies that the sick person will not be delivered from that illness; rather some impediment remains in the part of the body designated by that sign in which the azimuth degree is [located]. And you must inquire of the sick person or of another who knows the time span of the illness, because if the illness is one of several years, the sick person will not be quickly delivered.

Concerning the Sick Person, Whether He Will Escape [from the Illness].

Chapter II

If any sick person inquires of you whether he will be delivered from the illness or not, look at the Ascendant and its lord, and the Moon, which are the significators of the querent. See if the lord of the Ascendant is in the angle of the Ascendant or in the angle of the Midheaven; [if it is,] it signifies the sick person's deliverance unless that planet is impeded by malefics from the square aspect or from the opposition, or is combust, or is in the same minute with the Dragon's Tail, or going toward it, and there is less than 15 minutes between it and the Tail without the aspect of a fortune, because the aspect of a fortune breaks the malice of the Dragon's Tail, helping the lord of the Ascendant even if there is a square, whether with reception or not. But if it is from the opposition with reception, it likewise breaks the malice unless the planet is itself the lord of the eighth house, because then it does not help but does harm, whether that planet which is joined to the lord of the Ascendant, or to which the lord of the Ascendant is being joined, is a fortune or a malefic. If however the lord of the Ascendant is impeded, look then at the Moon; if she is free from malefics and is in an angle and aspects the Ascendant, and the lord of the eighth does not aspect the Moon, nor is joined bodily to her, it signifies the escaping from the illness. Look also at the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, to wit, at the one through which you work and which is stronger in the signification, whether it is above the earth, because that is a sign of deliverance, and especially if it aspects the Ascendant or is joined to a planet which

aspects the Ascendant and returns the light of the lord of the Ascendant to the Moon or to the Ascendant, and the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is not joined to a planet standing under the earth, [for] then it signifies deliverance unless poor care or bad safeguards cause the contrary because even a healthy person,¹ to say nothing of a sick person, may treat himself badly if he wishes, saying, "I will do this because this astrologer will be deceptive," [thereby] doing the contrary of that which he should do; nevertheless, inasmuch as you have performed according to your office, he who so thinks would charge the harm to himself due to his own fault. If however the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is under the earth, namely, in the second, third, fourth, fifth or sixth houses,² and should not be joined to any of those planets which stand above the earth, it signifies the sick person's death. If however a fortunate planet is retrograde to which is being joined the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, (which signifies the escaping of the sick person [from the illness]), it signifies the prolongation of the illness, and this the more strongly and the more widely if it is cadent from an angle; nevertheless, afterward he will be delivered. But if the planet to which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is being joined, and to which they commit their disposition, should enter into combustion, it signifies the death of the sick person. In addition, if the lord of the Ascendant is the significator (namely, because it is itself so strong that the signification is assigned to it rather than its being assigned to the Moon) and it is joined to some malefic standing under the earth, it signifies the sick person's death. If however the lord of the Ascendant is impeded as has been described so that it cannot be the significator of the sick person, but the signification comes down to the Moon,³ see whether the Moon herself is above the earth, which, if she

¹ *quia nedium infirmus sed sanus.*

² Notice the curious omission of the first house which would by modern reckoning be under the earth. If Bonatti were using the entire rising sign as the first house, then the first house would be always be partly above the horizon. But even according to the more common Medieval doctrine, five degrees of the first house would be reckoned as being above the horizon in any case. This could also be the basis of the omission.

³ This exemplifies a basic principle that is evident throughout Bonatti's writings. If more than one planet can be a significator, one starts with a particular significator, such as the Almuten, or domicile lord. But if that significator is not in good condition, the signification moves down to an

is joined to an evil planet standing under the earth, signifies the death of that sick person. Likewise, if the Moon is joined to the Lord of the Ascendant and the lord itself¹ is swift in motion and is descending from its own auge to the middle of its eccentric or from a more distant longitude to the first station,² which happens to it when the argument is from 15 degrees to two signs³ and 15 degrees, then it signifies that the sick person will be delivered and quickly reassume the strength of his body. And if you find the Moon or the lord of the Ascendant joined with Saturn, it signifies the prolongation of the illness even if it is a new illness. But if it is an old illness, it signifies a long duration. And if the lord of the Ascendant is under the earth, and the Moon is joined to a planet in the third, sixth, ninth, or twelfth houses, which planet is just now cadent from an angle, it signifies the death of the sick person.⁴ Likewise, if the lord of the Ascendant is joined to the lord of the eighth house, and the Moon is otherwise impeded, or the Moon is joined to the

alternate one that is in better condition. In this case and in horary astrology in general it is the Moon; in other instances it may go as follows: Almuten → Domicile Lord → Exaltation Lord → Triplicity Lord → Bound Lord → Face Lord. The house or Ascendant lord itself may be any one of the planets in the previous sequence although it is usually confined to the Almuten or domicile lord.

¹ *ipse*. While this passage makes complete sense and offers no real difficulties, a small typographical error in which *ipse* was an error for *ipsa* would make the Moon the subject of the following clause rather than the lord of the Ascendant. We are going on the assumption that the text is correct.

² *a longitudine longiori ad stationem primam*. The first three words of this phrase are problematical. It could also be translated as "from a greater distance." However we stand by the translation we have given, on the grounds that the previous reference to "descending from its own auge to the middle of its eccentric" is a reference to a planet coming in from a distant part of the eccentric to a nearer part. Similarly, when a planet comes from the conjunction with the Sun (superior conjunction in the case of Venus and Mercury) toward its first station, it is also coming from the outer part of its epicycle toward the earth, again coming from a longitude where it is more distant to a position nearer the earth.

³ This an instance of using the concept 'sign' to refer to an abstract measure of 30° rather than referring specifically to one of the twelve signs of the zodiac.

⁴ This is one of the few instances where cadency as an accidental debility includes being in the ninth or third house.

lord of the eighth house, and the lord of the Ascendant is impeded, this signifies the death of that sick person. This however must be attended to: See now whether the lord of the Ascendant is received by the lord of the eighth house, and the lord of the Ascendant does not itself receive the lord of the eighth, because this does not signify death but it signifies a very formidable illness, however the sick person will not be endangered except by error. If however the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, receives the lord of the eighth house, it signifies death.¹ Also you will look to see whether the significator of the sick person, or the Moon, is found in the ninth house from the Ascendant of the question, so that it raises a doubt that the sick person could easily be in danger of a mistake, because it seems that he should go to the grave. Moreover, if you find [the significator of the sick person, or the Moon,] in the ninth house from that house by which that person is signified,² it again signifies that it raises great doubt. And if there is the Moon or another planet which transfers the light of the lord of the Ascendant to the lord of the eighth, it signifies the extreme fear of the sick person and that the smallest error of eating or of diet will cause the sick person to be put in peril, and it will be [only] with difficulty that the sick person will escape [from the illness]; nevertheless, it would³ be possible that he might escape by means of the very best care and the best safeguards

¹ It may seem strange on first glance that it is good for the lord of the eighth house to receive the lord of the first, but not good for the lord of the first to receive the lord of the eighth. The reason for this lies in the mechanics of reception. First of all we have to assume that this is the type of reception in which the receiving planet is the lord by a major dignity of the received planet. (This is as opposed to the receiving planet being in its own dignity and receiving any planet to which it is joined.) In the case of this type of reception the received planet pushes the dignity that the receiving planet would have if were in that position onto the receiving planet and confers the nature of the house and sign occupied by the received planet onto the receiving planet. Thus, if the lord of the eighth receives the lord of the Ascendant, the lord of the eighth is strengthened and becomes more a lord of life. Whereas, if the lord of the first receives the lord of the eighth, the lord of the first becomes stronger also but becomes more like a lord of death and less like a lord of life.

² Assuming that the sick person is not signified by the Ascendant in this case.

³ *erat*. Here and in the next clause Bonatti uses the simple indicative imperfect form of the verb in a situation which clearly calls for a subjunctive. I have translated it as if the verbs were subjunctive.

both by those who are standing by and by the sick person, and also by those of the physician, and by the obeying of the physician by the sick person. If however the lord of the Ascendant is in the eighth house and is received by the lord of the eighth house, and the lord of the Ascendant does not receive the lord of the eighth house, it also signifies deliverance after a time of little hope. But if the lord of the Ascendant receives the lord of the eighth house, it signifies death.¹ If however the lord of the eighth house is more ponderous than the lord of the Ascendant, and the lord of the Ascendant is joined to it with reception such that the lord of the Ascendant receives the lord of the eighth, it signifies death.² But if there is a joining together of the lord of the Ascendant with the lord of the eighth, and that joining together is by trine or sextile aspect, it also signifies death whether the lord of the Ascendant receives the lord of the eighth or not.³ If the lord of the Ascendant is in any of the angles,⁴ it signifies death but not immediately; it signifies death when the lord of the eighth comes to the degree of the Ascendant. But if it is not then, it will be when the lord of the eighth house comes to the degree in which was the *lord* of the Ascendant at the hour of the question. Or [also] if it is the *lord* of the Ascendant [and] the *lord* of the eighth, it will be when the lord of the Ascendant comes to the degree in which was the lord of the eighth at the hour of the question.⁵ Likewise, if the Moon or some other planet

¹ Refer back to note 1 on page 77 for a discussion of these two statements.

² Bonatti definitely wants to drive this point home!

³ The logic seems to be that this constitutes a perfection between the lord of death and the lord of life, therefore one dies.

⁴ As well as being in the trine or sextile of the lord of the eighth house.

⁵ *Quod si tunc non fuerit erit quoniam dominus octave perveniet ad gradum in quo erat dominus ascendentis hora questionis: vel si fuerit dominus ascendentis dominus octave erit quoniam perveniet ad gradum in quo erat dominus octave hora questionis.* This passage presents a difficulty in that in the second part we have two nominatives, *dominus ascendentis* and *dominus octave*. If read exactly as the text presents itself, then we would have to translate this as, "or if the lord of the Ascendant is the lord of the eighth, it will be when *it* comes to the degree in which was the lord of the eighth. . ." This does not make sense. Therefore I have interpolated an *et* between the two nominatives, reading the phrase as meaning that if we *are* dealing with the two lords, then the time of death can be found not only when the lord of the eighth comes to the lord of the Ascendant, but also when the lord of the Ascendant comes to the lord of the eighth.

transfers the virtue or light of the lord of the Ascendant to the lord of the house of death, and the lord of death itself is strong, or is in an angle, and the lord of the Ascendant is cadent from an angle or is in the disposition of [being in] its own domicile or its own exaltation, it signifies death. But when it is not cadent from angle, even though it may be in opposition to its own domicile or exaltation, if it is received, it does not signify death. And if the lord of the eighth house is in the Ascendant, and the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is impeded, it signifies that the illness will be greatly increased and the sick person will be in danger of death; nevertheless, he will escape with good caretaking and precautions as have been described, although with difficulty. Likewise, if the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, are impeded, and that planet to which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, commit their disposition is impeded, it signifies death. But if only the receiver of the disposition (which is the ponderous planet to which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is being joined) is impeded, it signifies the prolongation of the illness, and this will happen because the sick person will relapse because he will not be cared for, nor will he preserve the proper diet, and because he will adhere to the advice of fools and of those who counsel him badly. Likewise, if the lord of the Ascendant is under the earth and is joined to the lord of the eighth in the fourth house, or is above the earth and is joined to the lord of the eighth in the eighth, or from the eighth, it signifies death if the lord of the Ascendant receives the lord of the eighth house. If however it does not receive the lord of the eighth, even though the lord of the eighth receives the lord of the Ascendant, the illness will become very serious and he will be in danger of death, yet he will be delivered with the help of that which is presented to him. Likewise, if the lord of the Ascendant does not aspect the lord of the eighth, nor does the lord of the eighth [aspect] the lord of the Ascendant, but some planet transfers light between them, and the lord of the Ascendant is cadent from the Ascendant, and the lord of the eighth is in some one of the angles, because his strength is worst in the angles, it signifies that the sick person will die from that illness.

And Zahel said that if the lord of the Ascendant is combust, and it is one of the superior planets, and it is before the Sun 13 degrees or less or after the Sun 4 degrees or less, or it is one of the inferior planets and it is before the Sun 3 degrees or less, or after the Sun 14 degrees or

less,¹ it signifies the death of the sick person unless by chance the lord of the Ascendant is received, because then it signifies the escape [of the sick person from the disease] after a time of hopelessness, and perhaps the sick person will seem dead when he is not; and it is possible that he is believed dead and endures alive.²

If however a ponderous planet to which the lord of the Ascendant commits its own virtue or disposition is free from impediments is not cadent from the angles nor from the Ascendant, and does not commit that disposition which the lord of the Ascendant commits to it to another planet, and the Moon likewise is free from impediments, it signifies that the sick person will be delivered even without much care by physicians.

And a certain one of the Cretan men³ has said that when the Part of Infirmary⁴ is [located] from the beginning of the Ascendant up to the end of the fourth house, it signifies that the cause of the infirmity is from a matter that is past. When it is [located] from the beginning of the fifth to the end of the eighth, it signifies that the illness is from a present cause. And when it is [located] from the beginning of the ninth to the end of the twelfth house, it signifies that the illness is from a future cause.

For the state of the illness, whether it is enduring or not, look at the lord of the sixth house, which is the house of infirmity, and see if it is a fixed sign; [if it is,] the infirmity will be made fast and will remain in its state, and will not be changed into another. But if there is a mutable sign, that illness will be changed easily to another state. But if it is a common sign, one illness will be alleviated in its turn and another illness will become serious.

¹ The reason these figures are more or less reversed between the superior planets and the inferior planets is because the order of application between the inferior planets and the Sun is the reverse of that between the superior planets and the Sun.

² *subiret virus*. Possibly the verb *subeo*, 'to go under' is a reference to being buried alive.

³ *ex cretaneis viris*. This is not a certain translation as the word *cretaneus* is not documented in precisely this form. To make matters worse, the typography of the text does make it clear whether the word is *cretaneis* or *eretaneis*. However, I can find nothing even resembling the latter word.

⁴ By day Asc. + σ° - γ , by night Asc. + γ - σ° . This is the same as the Lot of Accusation from the *Liber Hermetis* and Vettius Valens.

In order to know whether an illness is old or recent, look at the Moon and see from which planet she has separated; if indeed she has separated from an oriental planet, the disease will be recent, but if she has separated from an occidental planet, the illness will be an old one. If you find that the illness is an old one, with the conditions that have been mentioned before, you will consider the twelfth house and judge by that house the state of the illness, just as you have judged above concerning a recent illness by means of the lord of the sixth house.

In [the matter of] the deliverance from the illness, look in a similar manner, because if the Moon is being joined to an oriental planet, it signifies that the illness can be quickly cured. But if she is joined to an occidental planet, that illness will be cured slowly and with difficulty. But if she is joined to no planet,¹ move her from the sign in which she is into the next sign² and see to which planet she will be joined after the exit from the sign in which she is, whether she is being joined to an oriental planet or to an occidental planet, and according to that planet to which she is being joined, judge of the swiftness or slowness of the deliverance from the illness. And all of these matters are better and more swift if some fortune aspects the lord of the Ascendant, and the lord of the Ascendant is itself not cadent from the Ascendant nor an angle. Look likewise lest one of the malefics is being joined to the lord of the Ascendant, or the lord of the Ascendant to one of them, bodily or by the opposition or square aspect, because that makes it unfortunate; and hardly ever will it permit the sick person to escape [the illness]. If that malefic receives the lord of the Ascendant, the sick person will escape and with difficulty. If however the malefic does not receive, one must fear then that he will not escape, indeed he will not be delivered. Consider also the Moon which, if she is joined to a planet which is swift in motion, and she herself is swift in motion, signifies that the sick person will be delivered quickly. If she is joined to a retrograde planet, it signifies the prolongation of the illness and its long duration. But if she is joined to a planet which is slow in motion, it signifies the prolongation and aggravation of the illness such that the sick person will escape [the illness] with difficulty, and it seems rather that he dies than that he will escape.

¹ I.e., is void in course.

² *aliud*. Normally this means 'another' but the context clearly shows Bonatti means the next sign. He does not take a void in course Moon as a negative answer.

In addition, you should look at the place of the Moon in the hour of a question or in the beginning of an illness if you have its beginning, and examine where the Moon will be on the seventh day from the beginning of the illness or the question, and likewise where it will be on the fourteenth day, and where it will be on the twenty-first day, and where it will be on the twenty-eighth day, because if she is well disposed on any of those days, then the sick person will be relieved and his state will seem better to him and the crisis will be for the good unless malefics impede bodily or from the opposition or square aspect with reception.¹ And if in any of those days the Moon is impeded and badly disposed, it signifies that then the sick person will be oppressed and it will be the worse for him, and especially if the Moon is then in conjunction with the lord of the sixth house because then it will be made uncertain concerning the sick person. But if the malefic which impedes is the lord of the eighth, then the sick person will die.

In addition, see on which day of the other days besides the ones mentioned above the Moon is joined to a good planet; on that day the sick person will be relieved and will rest, and it will be more healthful for him. And from this it sometimes happens that a crisis falls upon the sick person for the good on a day on which it is not supposed, nor does it seem that it ought to happen. And see on which of the other days besides the ones mentioned previously the Moon goes toward the bodily conjunction of the malefics, or their opposition or square aspect, because on that day the sick person will be made very much worse, and especially if the Moon is joined with the lord of the sixth house; and if a crisis comes, it will be more for harm than for health, and especially if it happens that the Moon is joined with the lord of the 8th house, because then the crisis may be more toward death than toward life. And in this matter physicians are deceived sometimes because they predict a crisis will happen on a critical day according to medicine, and the crisis happens otherwise than when they say because it happened according to the conjunction of the Moon with planets on those days; for this reason physicians are held in slight esteem by laymen because

¹ This is a simple form of a standard method used throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. It is found in Culpepper, Saunders, and others in the 17th Century English astrology.

they are deceived in their prognostications, and yet they must not be blamed.

Moreover, it is necessary that you discover these days as mentioned above so that if you wish to know the seventh day from the day of the illness or from the day of the question, it is necessary that you consider in which degree the Moon was in the hour of the question or the beginning of the illness, and add to this 90 other degrees and you will have the seventh day; then look at those 90 degrees from the degree of the Moon and in which sign the number ends; the Moon will be there in that degree or you can equate according to tables and the same place will be discovered. Then see where and by which planets it is aspected, and according the aspect of good or bad planets toward the Moon, judge of good or of evil for the sick person.

In order to discover the 14th day of the question or the beginning of the illness, you will add 180 degrees to the place of the Moon obtained in the first place and project them from the degree in which the Moon was, and where the number falls, there will be the place of the Moon on the 14th day from the day of the question or the beginning of the illness; and then judge concerning the 14th day just as you have judged above concerning the seventh day. However, in order to discover the 21st day, add to the place of the Moon 270 degrees and look at the place of the Moon mentioned above, and where the number falls, there will be the place of the Moon on the 21st day from the day of the question or the beginning of the illness. Look then at the aspect of the planets toward the Moon and judge inasmuch as you have judged concerning the seventh day. In order to discover the 28th day, add to the place of the Moon 360 degrees and you will have the place of the Moon at the hour of the question or the illness, and then judge as has been said above concerning the 7th day. And know that on all of these days, always whenever the Moon comes to the good planets, then the sick person will be relieved; and whenever the Moon comes to the malefics, then he will be made worse.

Whether Someone Absent Will Become Ill.

Chapter IV

And if someone is anxious concerning one who is absent, or anyone else, as to whether that person is ill or not, see of what position the one who asks may be and the one about whom he asks and judge according

to that, namely, whether he asks about a brother, or his father, or child, or servant, or wife, or partner, or enemy, or a bishop or other clerical person, or a king, or another lord, or his friend, or hidden enemy, because it is necessary that you give the first house to the querent and to the sought after person that house by which the sought after person is signified. Look then at the Ascendant and its lord, and give that to the querent, and [look at] the lord of the house by which the sought after person is signified, and you will give the Moon to the sought after person.

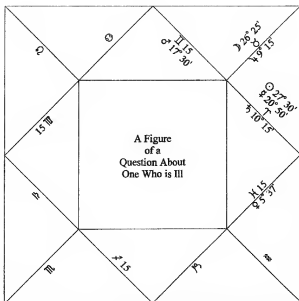
If the lord of the house of the sought after person, or the Moon, is in an angle, not impeded by a malefic, it signifies that the absent person is in good health. [It is] the same if one of these is in the succedent of the angles,¹ free from the malefics and from the other impediments described above.

If however the lord of the sought after person is in the sixth house or is joined to the lord of the sixth bodily, or in its opposition, or square aspect, it signifies the absent person is ill whether it is in the sixth house of the question, or it is in the sixth house from the absent person's own house, or is joined with its lord. But if none of the aforesaid impediments is present, say that the absent person is not becoming ill.

And the master² said that if the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, are void in course, you should see which of them has gone through more degrees in the sign in which it is [located] and move that one to another sign which succeeds that sign, and look at the planet to which it is first joined, to a fortune or malefic; if it is joined to a fortune which receives it, this signifies deliverance unless that fortune is impeded by the impediments described above, or the fortune is the lord of the 8th house, because then one must suspect the death of an ill person, and especially if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, receives the lord of eighth house; but if it does not receive the lord of the eighth house, it signifies escape from infirmity after an almost complete loss of hope; still it seems that the absent person ought to escape [from the illness] unless an error of the physician, sick person, or those about him causes the contrary, according to such an example [as below.]

¹ Reading *angulorum* for *angulum*.

² At this point we do know who the "master" is.



[There was] a question about a certain sick person. The Ascendant was 15 degrees of Virgo; the tenth house, 15 degrees of Gemini,¹ and Mars² in 17 degrees and 30 minutes; and the Moon, in Taurus, 26 degrees and 25 minutes; Jupiter in Taurus, 9 degrees and 15 minutes; the Sun in Aries, 27 degrees and 30 minutes; Saturn in Aries, 10 degrees and 15 minutes; Mercury in Aries, 20 degrees and 50 minutes; Venus in Pisces, 5 degrees and 37 minutes.

And he³ described what aspects the Ascendant and its lord, and the Moon, and the other planets, and the angles, and the other houses. And

¹ We have here a chart using equal houses from the Ascendant. The text shows that this is not one of Bonatti's charts.

² The positions in the chart in the Ratdolt edition did not give the minutes, but the text does so I have added them to the chart.

³ We do not know who "he" is, but it may be the "master" referred to in one of the preceding paragraphs, also unknown.

Mercury, which was the lord of the Ascendant, is void in course, namely, joined to no one,¹ and the Moon is likewise void in course joined to no one. Therefore, the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, by their emptiness of course signify the prolongation of that infirmity and its seriousness; wherefore, he² has moved the Moon from the sign in which she is, to wit, from Taurus into Gemini. And he moved the Moon and not the lord of the Ascendant for this reason, because she had gone through more degrees of the sign in which she was [located] than Mercury, the lord of the Ascendant, [had] in his sign. And after she had entered into Gemini, she was first joined to Venus, which was in Pisces, before any other planet, and the Moon committed to Venus her own disposition; and Venus was being joined to Jupiter and received him from her own domicile, namely, from Taurus, and likewise Jupiter received Venus from his own domicile, to wit, from Pisces. And Jupiter did not commit disposition to any planet because he was not being joined to Saturn, for Jupiter is not joined to any planet except Saturn, which is more ponderous than him; but all of the other planets are joined to him because they are swifter than him.³ And that joining together which Venus was making with Jupiter by mutual reception⁴ signified that the sick person should be delivered from the illness. Still the illness would be on the increase until the joining together of Venus with Jupiter to the degree, and she crosses beyond him by one minute. And it was seen that the illness would be on the increase for two days and 15 hours, giving for each degree one day and for every five minutes two hours, because there were 2 degrees and 38 minutes between the perfect joining together of these planets, since from then forward the sick person begins to be relieved. And he said that it was the sick person who asked concerning his own state, and his infirmity did not cease to be increased until the joining together of Venus with Jupiter was completed to the degree. Immediately when Venus had been

¹ Although the Sun is later in the same sign, it will leave the sign before Mercury catches up to it; therefore, it is void in course.

² Figuratively speaking, the astrologer.

³ There is no familiarity between Jupiter and Saturn except the semisextile which was not recognized by traditional astrologers.

⁴ This is the strongest kind of mutual reception, a close, favorable aspect between planets in each others' domiciles. It is not clear whether Bonatti recognized mutual receptions between planets that were not in aspect and in signs that had no familiarity.

separated from Jupiter by one minute, the sick person began to be relieved, and he began to rest, and his illness was diminished.

And the same philosopher said that if Venus were joined to Mars and not to Jupiter, the sick person would die unless Mars, which was the lord of the eighth house,¹ should receive Venus and Venus not receive him, because if she receives Mars, it would be seen that the sick person would accept death and would die because Mars signifies the matter about which there is a question, namely, death; this is because [with regard to] the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, always when both or one of them are joined with the lord of the matter sought for, the matter about which the question has been asked is perfected, especially if reception intervenes; for the judgment of death is not entirely as the judgment of other matters; because if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined with the lord of the eighth without reception, it signifies death unless the lord of the eighth receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, and the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, do not receive the lord of the eighth. But if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, receives the lord of the eighth, it signifies death whether or not the lord of the eighth receives the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon.

For death is not just as other matters are because when death is signified, one does not look at whether or not the matter may be altered after it has happened, for none of the significators can alter or destroy death after it has come into reality, whereas other matters are changed or destroyed sometimes even after they have been perfected. For when the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined with the lord of the matter sought for, or the lord of the matter sought for is joined with the lord of the Ascendant, the accomplishment of that matter is signified. But although the matter may be perfected, sometimes (as I have said to you above) after the lord of the matter sought for is joined to a malefic which impedes it to which malefic the lord commits disposition, the matter is destroyed after it has been perfected. But in death it cannot happen that it be destroyed after it has been perfected because death itself resolves every question and its sentence is such that from it one

¹ This is an emendation. The text says "*dominus domus quartae*", "the lord of the fourth house," but Jupiter, the other planet referred to, is the lord of the fourth. This is almost certainly a scribal error, especially in view of the fact that the text has been emphasizing the effect of receptions involving the eighth house lord.

cannot appeal. It is not this way concerning health or deliverance [from illness], because if some planet should signify the deliverance [from illness] of the sick person, and afterward it is joined with an evil planet which impedes it and commits its disposition to that planet, the matter may be destroyed after it will seem that the matter ought to be perfected, namely, the deliverance of the sick person [from the illness]. For this reason one who seems bound to be delivered [from an illness] can die after it would seem that he could escape; but he who has died cannot be revived after death whatever the receiver of the disposition seems to signify afterwards.¹

You will also consider in which part of the figure you will find the lord of the house which signifies the sick person, namely, whether it is in the first quadrant, or in the second quadrant, or in the third, or in the fourth, and operate by means of that fact. If you should find it in the first quadrant of the figure, it signifies that the querent asks about an illness which has already been. If however it is in the second quadrant, it signifies that the querent asks about an illness which exists at the time. But if it is in the third quadrant, it signifies that the querent asks about an illness which will be, or about a recurrence, because it signifies that it will recur. But if it should be in the last quadrant, it signifies that the querent asks about a chronic illness, to wit, one which has already been in existence, and is still so at the time, and will be in the future or will continue; and this will be the more certain if the significator is joined with any of the lords of the signs of any of those quadrants in its own quadrant.²

¹ This last paragraph is a classic example of Bonatti leaving nothing to the imagination!

² In other words, the indication is more secure if the significator is found joined to the lord of any of the signs which constitute the quadrant in question.

Whether or Not a Servant¹ May Be Freed from Servitude.
Chapter V

In the preceding chapter we spoke of the sick person, whether or not he would be delivered from the illness. It remains now to speak in this chapter of a servant, whether or not he might be released from servitude, because servitude is [to be]² compared with the most vicious of illnesses; for there is not an illness which can be called worse than that which always afflicts everywhere, indifferently, and continuously; for there is no illness but that it afflicts with some kind of interval between [the afflictions] or with some kind of rest, except for servitude; in servitude no interval or rest intervenes.

Wherefore, if a question should be moved for a servant, such as if a servant should say absolutely, "See whether or not I will be delivered from servitude," then the first house is given to the servant and the lord of the Ascendant and the Moon likewise; but the tenth is given to his master,³ whatever kind of master he may be, even if the master should otherwise be a base person. Look then at the lord of the Ascendant for the servant and see if it is joined to the lord of the tenth house; and if the joining together is perfect, whether it is a bodily conjunction or an aspectual one (whatever kind of aspect it may be), whether it is with reception or without reception, and if the joining together is completed to the degree and to the minute, say that the servant will be delivered from servitude easily and quickly. But if the lord of the Ascendant is separated from the lord of the tenth by one minute or more, it signifies this, that he has already been delivered from servitude. But if what I have described to you concerning the lord of the Ascendant is not [so], then look at the Moon as significatrix and judge according to that which I have described to you concerning the lord of the Ascen-

¹ Due to the ambiguity of *servus* in the Middle Ages, this chapter title could equally be entitled "Whether or Not a *Serf* may be Freed from Servitude." But I am going to go with "servant" or "serving-man" because it has a more general meaning, and because our "serf" is a special instance of what the Middle Ages meant by *servus*. 'Servant' is used when the person may be of either sex, and 'serving-man' and 'serving-woman' where the sex of the individual is an issue.

² The grammar of the Latin does not quite justify this rendition, but English syntax demands it.

³ *dominus*.

dant.

If indeed what I have described to you concerning the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is not [so], to wit, that neither of them is being separated from the lord of the tenth house, look at them again; and if you should find that they [both], or either of them, have been joined with the Sun in the manner that I have described with the lord of the tenth, or have been separated from him according to the conditions previously described, you will judge the same concerning these matters with [the use of] the Sun as you will have judged with the lord of the tenth.

But if his question was determinate and not absolute,¹ such as if he were to say, "Will I be delivered from the service of this master of mine, in which I [now] am?" or "Will I go forth from his power or not?" then look at the lord of the Ascendant and see whether it is cadent from an angle and does not aspect the Ascendant, and is not joined with a planet in an angle and is not joined with one which aspects the Ascendant, or it is in the third or the ninth house or joined with a planet which is in those houses, say that he will be delivered from that servitude, and he will go forth from the power of his lord; but if it is not so with respect to the lord of the Ascendant, if it should be [so] with respect to the Moon, you will judge the same.

But if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, should be in the Ascendant, or in the tenth house, or the fourth house, or the seventh house, or one of these is joined to a planet in those houses, the querent will not be liberated if that planet to which the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined should be direct. But if it is retrograde, it signifies liberation but with slowness, the greatest difficulty, complication, and delay. If however the lord of the Ascendant should be in the Ascendant, tenth house, seventh house, or fourth house, impeded by bodily conjunction with some one of the evil planets, or by the opposition of one, or the square aspect, or if it enters into combustion, the querent will not be freed from that servitude except by death, which loosens every trap by means of its evil loosening.

¹ The term 'determinate' is discussed in my General Note.

Whether a Lord Will Sell a Serving-man.¹

Chapter VI

If indeed a serving-man who hopes or perhaps fears lest his lord sell him or in some other manner transfer him should sometimes ask, saying, "Is my master at whose house I am good for me, or is the other master to whom I am going better for me?" look then at the lord of the first house; if it is joined to some planet which receives it from the sign in which it is by domicile or exaltation, or by two of the other minor dignities, and the lord of the seventh house is not received, that master in whose household he is, and in whose power the serving-man is [at present], is the better master for him. But if the lord of the seventh house is received, that master to whom he hopes to go is the better for him.

In addition to this consider the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, and see from which planet one of these is being separated, and see to which planet it is being joined; if it is separated from a fortune and is being joined to a malefic, that master with whom he is [at present] is the better for him. But if the significator is separated from a malefic and being joined to a fortune, that master to whom he intends to go is the better for him. If however one of these, to wit, the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is separated from a fortune and being joined to a fortune, both masters will be good for him. But if the state of one of the fortunes is better than the state of the other, judge according to the better one. But if the significator is being separated from a malefic and joined to a malefic, both masters will be bad for him according to how each of these is disposed. And if you do not find that the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, will be joined to any planet, if each of them is void in course, see in which sign each is (to wit, the lord of the Ascendant or also the Moon); if it has a greater dignity in that sign than in the seventh or in the second house, to wit, either by exaltation, bound, triplicity, or face,² the master with whom

¹ We now use the term 'serving-man' for *servus* because in this and the next chapters Bonatti begins to make distinctions based on the sex of the servant.

² Domicile is omitted from this list because the lord of the Ascendant is the domicile lord of the Ascendant. The issue is whether the lord of the Ascendant has a higher dignity score in the seventh or second house than in the Ascendant.

the querent is will be the better for the querent. But if the lord of the Ascendant has greater dignity in the second or in the seventh house than it does in the ascending sign, the other master¹ will be better than the first master.

**Concerning the Buying of a Serving-man or Concerning Any
Small Animal Whatever, or a Serving-woman.
Chapter VII**

We have spoken concerning whether or not a serving-man will be liberated from servitude. In this chapter it remains to speak concerning the buying of a serving-man; and when I say serving-man, you can understand the same about any small animal whatever which is not ridden and which is signified by the sixth house. For this reason, if someone should be concerned about a serving-man and wishes to buy the serving-man, and he poses a question to you [as to] whether or not the purchase of the serving-man whom he intends to buy may be completed for him, look at the lord of the Ascendant and the significatrix (which is the Moon), which are the signifiers of the querent, and see if both, or one of them, are joined to the lord of the sixth house, or the lord of the sixth house with the lord of the Ascendant, or if you find some planet which transfers light between the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the sixth, say to the querent that he will acquire the serving-man about whom he asks, or a small animal about which he asks which is signified by the sixth house. But if you do not find the lord of the Ascendant joined with the lord of the sixth house, or the Moon, or the other way around,² nor do you find any planet which transfers light between them, the querent will not acquire the serving-man or small animal about which he speaks.

But if the question is about the buying of a serving-woman, the cobbler³ said that you should place the twelfth house for the serving

¹ The one to whom the querent is being sold or otherwise transferred.

² I.e., that the lord of the sixth house is joined to the lord of the Ascendant or to the Moon.

³ A mysterious personage that we have encountered before, but about whom we know nothing.

woman. But Arastellus¹ gave the sixth house for both a serving-woman and a serving-man. But the intention of Arastellus was that when mention was made concerning a serving-woman, it was just as [it would be] according to the chapter on men-servants. But the intention of the cobbler was just that a serving-woman would be the wife of a serving-man that someone intended to buy, because if the sixth signifies a serving-man, its opposite house signifies the wife of the serving-man, which house is the twelfth house; and so both have spoken properly. Wherefore, if a question is asked about a serving-woman by herself, she is of the class of servants so you can give to her the sixth house just like a male servant. But if the question is asked about a serving-woman inasmuch as she is the wife of a serving-man concerning whom there is a question, you can give her the twelfth house. You can also give her the twelfth house for another reason, namely, when someone seeks about a serving-woman of someone else; [then] the first house is given to the querent, the seventh house is given to that other person from whom the serving-woman was sought, the sixth from the seventh house, which is the twelfth house from the first, is given to the serving-woman of that person from whom the serving-woman was sought, and in the same manner you may give the 12th house to a serving-man.²

Wherefore, if a question is made to you concerning a serving-woman, and the question is absolute, just as I have spoken to you above on the liberation of a servant, then you will give to the serving-woman the sixth house. But if the question is about a serving-woman inasmuch as she is the wife of a serving-man, then you will give her the 12th house. And if in the first condition you find that the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined with the lord of the sixth house, or the lord of the sixth house [is joined] with the lord of the Ascendant,³ say that the querent will obtain the serving-woman about whom he speaks. If indeed in the second condition you find the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is joined with the lord of the 12th, or the lord of the 12th with them, judge this [to be] the same. Likewise, if any of the planets should transfer light between them, it will signify the obtaining of the serving-woman just as I have described to you concerning a serving-man.

¹ Also unknown, but possibly a corrupt form of Aristotle to whom were attributed several apocryphal astrological works.

² If he is likewise someone else's serving-man.

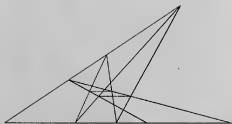
³ Or, most likely, the Moon as we see in the next instance.

Whether a Master Will Obtain the Property of a Serving-man or
Woman.

Chapter VIII

In this chapter is remains to say whether or not the property of a servant will come to the possession of his master. For a certain serving-man of a certain man was dead; that man whose servant he was asked whether he would obtain the remaining property of that servant. See whether such a question is made to you; [if so,] then you should look at the lord of the Ascendant, and the Moon, and see if both, or only one or the other of these, are joined to the lord of the 7th house, which signifies the substance of the servant because that house is the second from the sixth house, which signifies servants, and the 7th house their substance. [If so,] say that the master will acquire the sought for substance, namely, that which was [the property] of the servant; and say the same if the lord of the 7th is joined to the lord of the first house. Likewise if the lord of the Ascendant, or the Moon, is in the seventh, or if the lord of the seventh is in the Ascendant, or even in the second. But this is not so safe, because if the lord of the second is impeded at the time, or the lord of the seventh receives it, and the lord of the second does not receive it, the master [of that servant] can endure loss in his substance because of recouping the substance of the servant. Likewise, if some planet transfers light between the lord of the Ascendant and the lord of the seventh, the [servant's] lord will obtain the substance of the servant at the hands of someone who involves himself in the matter.

End of Part I of Bonatti on Horary.



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